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WESTERN AMERICANA

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"Cheyenne," "White Shield's" boy in native dress.

"FORT RENO"

OR

PICTURESQUE "CHEYENNE AND ARRAPAHOE ARMY LIFE," BEFORE THE OPENING OF "OKLAHOMA"

BY

MRS. D. B. DYER

NEW YORK
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DEDICATED TO MY FATHER,

Hon. N. R. Casey,

AND HIS ILLUSTRIOUS COLLEAGUES,

SENATORS

JOHN M. PALMER, SHELBY M. CULLOM,

AND WILLIAM R. MORRISON,

ALL OF

WHOM I HOLD IN AFFECTIONATE

REMEMBRANCE.

5

PREFACE.

THERE is a pathos of grief in the parting and breaking of long-loved ties, but when, in the whirlwind of fate, a few years ago, without a beckoning light or glimmering star to guide me, I turned from my threatened destruction with persistency and resignation to the life-long friends of my father, who with cordial outstretched hands and hearty genial tones welcomed me to the chamber of the "United States Senate" with as much affability and tender consideration as they had before greeted me in the home of my childhood.

I was not gorgeously decorated with a be-ribboned blanket, neither was my throat adorned with rows and rows of rainbow-tinted beads when I called at the great, beautiful white Capitol, only a jetted "crow's wing" (the ghost-dance symbolical bird), to add artistic fascination and stand sentinel over my civilized bonnet trappings, gave a suspicion that I was just in from the wild plains of the West, where prowling coyotes, prickly pears cacti, and wicked bronchos grow.

But I was thoroughly identified with border life, and carried concealed a "potent relic," whose superstitious connection as a medicine was, that a small dose given to a victim made him vain of his beauty, and conceited, while a large dose made him an idiot. Having administered at one time, to my disadvantage, an heroic portion of this poisonous property to a party already born dazzlingly satisfied with his alluring attractions, I recognized when I reached the home of "The Great Father at Washington" my belief was not only uncanny, but hazardous, and I at once buried the root on the spot with religious honors, and secret, sacred rites.

There was a twinkle in the eye of my great good friends however, and they looked as if they expected my voluble chat to unconsciously merge into the "Cheyenne and Arrapahoe" dialect, or, as I was known to be proficient in the "Indian sign language," to inadvertently try to make myself understood in this manner. But whatever the "jargon" I may have inflicted, the following letters of sincerity are proof that I conducted myself with at least semi-barbarous decorum, reflecting little upon my early training and that there was not a place in all the wide world where I could have been more flatteringly received than I was by these public spirits, who were busy dealing out acts of courtesy and deeds of kindness to their fellow-man.

UNITED STATES SENATE,
Washington, July 12, 1892.

HON. GEO. R. DAVIS, Director-General, World's Fair.

My dear Sir:—Mrs. D. B. Dyer, daughter of my old friend, Dr. N. R. Casey, of Illinois, is anxious to obtain some leading position in connection with the Indian exhibit at the World's Columbian Exposition. In addition to being the daughter of my old friend, which gives her strong claims upon me, I beg to say Mrs. Dyer is a lady of culture and refinement, has had large experience among the Indians and is familiar with the Indian character. You will certainly find her services extremely valuable. I am, very respectfully,

JOHN M. PALMER.

UNITED STATES SENATE,
Washington, July 11, 1892.

HON. GEO. R. DAVIS, Director-General, World's Fair.

My dear Sir:—Permit me to introduce to you Mrs. D. B. Dyer, who is the daughter of my old friend, Dr. N. R. Casey, of the distinguished Casey family of our State. Mrs. Dyer is a most excellent lady, and is entitled to the highest consideration. She desires to see you in relation to appointment in connection with the great exposition of which you are the head. I hope you will regard this letter as not written in a perfunctory spirit, but because I am very anxious that this lady shall be accommodated in the direction she deserves. Please hear her, and if you possibly can, do what she desires. Truly yours,

SHELBY M. CULLOM,

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION,
Washington, July 10, 1892.

HON. GEO. R. DAVIS, Director-General, World's Fair, Chicago, Ill.

Dear General:—Mrs. D. B. Dyer aspires to be useful in the Indian branch of the Columbian Exposition work under your control or general management. While in their country with her husband, Mrs. Dyer made herself familiar with the Indians, their legends, traditions, history, and characteristics, learned to communicate with them in their sign language, and is well equipped for the work in which I trust you will afford her ample opportunity.

Mrs. Dyer is a daughter of Dr. Casey, and, as you know, of a family whose creditable history begins earlier than that of our State. Respectfully yours,

WM. R. MORRISON.

"CALUMET PLACE," *Washington, D. C., July* 14, 1892.

MY DEAR GENERAL DAVIS:

As Senator Cullom has written you, the bearer of this note is a most estimable lady of a distinguished family. I sincerely hope she may receive some employment commensurate with her deserts. She has had large experience and will not fail in any position assigned her. Respectfully,

MRS. JOHN A. LOGAN.

Introducing Mrs. D. B. Dyer.

I tremble at the criticism of this, my audacious venture, and unpretentious effort to interest the public, but my heart is buried on the border, at the spot marked by "six little graves," and there is no pleasure, or a better place for me to float back into the past era, than wile away my memory in utter rest, and enjoyment undisturbed by the *fin de siècle* atrocities of "big sleeves" and "godets" than this little peep into a land of other days.

FORT RENO.

CHAPTER I.

THERE come in the lives of most young girls, magnificent visions of the future. They weave for themselves a romance of unceasing pleasures, in an atmosphere of perfect bliss.

The blue of azure skies is in their eyes. Their voices are drowsy with the murmur of the droning sea, and they drift along in that dreamy rainbow-tinted time when apple-blossoms bloom, and the golden-throated robin swings in the linden-tree, to pour forth his evening song.

I was in this bright, glimmering stage, just having passed through a strict discipline in one of the best-known convents of the country, and then enjoying the delights of a Governor's home, when I was rudely initiated, a young bride, into a new world of more practical thought.

I would have followed my "Hero" into the jungles of Africa, and when I reached "Kansas City" I began to think that country was not far removed. Here was the Kaw River, a sluggish torrent of black mud, running through the deep prairies of Kansas, and after making a bend butting itself against the Missouri river, directly up stream, but the Missouri didn't mind that little diversion at all, it had just as soon run up stream as down. Part of the town was sitting three hundred feet in the air, on top of red clay bluffs, the other in the bottoms in a triangle between these two meandering rivers. I was here regaled with harrowing tales of John Brown—his murderous gang—the "jay-hawkers," who succeeded him, infamous blotches on American history, and I already had stored away in a definite place of my memory that this stopping-place was the home of the "James' boys, Fords, and Youngers;" where with trappers, plainsmen, and scouts, all handy with their guns, and "dead-game shots," made me doubt if the early days when it tried men's souls to live there, when the sunflower state was passing through a vortex of crime and Indian depredation, had passed.

My rosy reveries commenced their flight, and had it not been for the ecstatic frame of my mind, I would have become bewildered, like the man who rode his horse backwards, and begged to be informed whether he was "comin' or a-goin'," and as old Uncle Ned used to say to Aunt Ginny, as he started from his clay-chinked-cabin, "Whar'm I gwine? All de time askin' me whar I'm gwine. I'm gwine whar I'm gwine, that's whar I'm gwine," and as the faithful old genius was always cheerful, and "never a-keerin'" which way he went, so I was happy the same way. I was soon listening to my first song of the wind-swept prairies of sun-lit Kansas, and it was as varied as the moods of a maiden. I had reached the exaggeratingly breezy country, where the whisk-broom-goatee-man said "he never did see such cuttin'-up of elements," and when the stranger asked him if it was a good settlin' place, he answered that, "it was only kind a-so, for his barn blowed into the next county in April, and he lost his house 'long in June, kited over east about three miles and lit in Cherry Creek. Didn't mind that so much," he said, "got'em back and anchored 'em again all right;" but along about the ninth of July, "when one of the doggondest zephers he ever did see commenced to blow, his Bantam rooster was just flappin' his wings to crow and it blew the crow out of him and every livin' feather on his body was blowed clean off—just leavin' the pin-feathers; and shorter than it takes to tell it," he continued after a reflective pause, "along came a streak of Kansas lightnin' and singed the rooster clean."

I stood near men who were shot to death. I saw women standing in full view of the street, calling "Keno," where men and women, with but one dominant passion in life, would rather bet on the game, and lose than not to bet at all, and where they went on "fighting the tiger," from day's end to day's end. To kill, on an average, a man a day was an expected and ordinary occurrence, while I digested before breakfast, every morning, the local paper of itimized horrors.

I heard music, loud and shrill, issuing from every other door, that contained a concert saloon, for "Baxter Springs" was the "Monte Carlo" of the West, and hundreds of thousands of dollars were won and lost on the green cloth in this town. The stockmen, cow-boys, rancheros of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and Old Mexico, always turned their faces toward "Baxter Springs" when their purses were full and they wanted a paying limit.

The widely known cow-boy, the picturesque character in western life, with his showy costume, love of adventure, and contempt for the proprieties of conventional life, whose story of deeds has become a part of history, and who deserves some modern Homer to sing his prowess and embalm in epic verse his fame (for anything less would be a feeble record of his exploits) had marked this spot his own, had defied all civil authority to satisfy his wildest desires, in filling his own private burying-ground. Wearing fringed leather-breeches, and buckskin coat, broad leather belt filled with cartridges, carrying long-barreled straight-handled pistols, and crooked daggers of dazzling brightness, with lariat and slicker tied to his saddle, he looked the picture that represents him; for he lived in the open air the year round, while nearly every night in the three hundred and sixty-five, rain or shine, he had only the sky for a roof, his saddle for a pillow, and the bare ground for a bed. His life was the hardest roughest of lives, and danger was his delight. He depended upon his firearms, coolness, marksmanship and the known reckless dare-devil courage of his comrades.

It was an hourly occurrence for one of these border ruffians to march up to a bar with an order to "gimme a drink," and as the barkeeper would put a bottle and glass in front of him, he would pour liquor to the brim, holding the bottom of the glass with his hand, when, not satisfied with having already gained his spurs by the mark of many notches on the handle of his revolver, and still thirsting for a bad man's reputation, he would shoot the ashes off a stranger's cigar and offer to shoot them on again if he objected to the familiarity; he would hesitate a moment to look at the bright red color, then a crack, and a little film of blue smoke curling up would tell what had happened, for he had not only shivered the glass, but probably everything around him in his promiscuous firing during the intervals of his drink.

I witnessed his feat of heroism that consisted in taking a town, galloping through the streets, shouting and yelling, firing revolvers in the air, riding into saloons, and stores and putting out their lights, and stopping clocks. This was the place where "preachers" delivering their sermons on wasted life and the golden opportunities for redemption that his hearers were missing, counted those with a religious turn of mind, and a remarkable steadiness of aim, among their worst disturbers; where they annoyed all denominations impartially, and generally managed to break up as many meetings for the Baptists as for the Methodists; riding their "bronchos" in a church door, with gleaming six-shooter, demanding the preacher to dance, and as there was nothing else for him to do but dance, it was dance or die, so he danced.

A society wild, free, and disorderly, the country was a paradise of outlaws, and desperadoes. Murder was done in open day with frequency, and a man held it a shame to die otherwise than "with his boots on," as he expressed it. Variety knew no end in the streets. Saloons, where the walls presented an unbroken line of mirrors, and ceilings, sumptuous in gold and fresco, down to the meanest grogshop, whose customers found a tonic in dirt, and tobacco-smoke flourished. For these were days of desperatism where the roughs and criminals gathered on the outskirts of civilization, and the commonest misunderstandings were settled on the spot with revolver or knife.

"Last Chance," "Live and let Live," "Cow-boy's Retreat," "The Frontier-man's Delight," and other flaunting saloons were filled with a coterie of gamblers, with exaggerated suavity of manner, while the glare and glamour of these drunken resorts shaded the faces of men dull and brutal. Gilded hells, where bleak winds blow, and want and sorrow roll their black serges, sheltered women who were hardened, weary, hopeless trophies to the goddess of infamy, following the dark tramp down the path that ends in death.

A life on these grassy plains must necessarily have been full of incident. Every man you met was a character marked with peculiarities. Nature seemed to have left the unmistakable impress of her hand upon the minds and manners of the inhabitants, for while sturdy yeomanry were steadily pioneering westward, this new country found itself in the possession of a lawless mass of the rougher element. It was not an uncommon thing for men in misfortune to find it convenient to start for the land of "sunset" between two days. The majority of the population were defaulters of some sort, before they left their homes in the East. There were many broken-down merchants, absconding debtors, escaped criminals, young scamps who dodged a suit for a breach of promise of marriage, scoundrels who avoided a prosecution for something worse, and married men who wished to live apart from their wives, or with some other man's wife, or who wanted wives by the score. The imagination almost recoils from conjuring up before it the alternate picture that would convey a faithful idea of the social condition of the life of the people in this western town. A thousand incidents connected with the earlier history of the pioneer would give material for a thrilling romance, for ancient, medieval, and modern history with their records rolled into one could not more shock or appall a civilized world.

My white plumes and gorgeous bridal array were relegated to oblivion, and only under civilian escort for protection was I free from insult on the street; for on each side of the long line of thoroughfare vulgarity and obscenity were being applauded vociferously in dens that were emitting sonorous cries of Keno dealers, and sounds of clinking chips, while variety shows, dance-halls, black, white, and yellow, as well as other resorts from the palace to the hovel, in which all grades of human life were being entertained at every hour of the twenty-four and seven days a week in all degrees of depravity by the thump of a piano, or the screech of a violin playing the enticing refrain, "Waltz your partner to the bar," with the common custom of showering silver dollars over the stars went merrily on.

Having existed in such a vicinity, I felt like a veteran, reeking of border experience and reminiscences of lawless times, but I strengthened myself with new faculties to devote myself to new objects, for I had read the order that we were to be transferred to the "Cheyenne and Arrapahoe Reservation" two hundred and fifty miles southwest.

After innumerable annoyances which may torment one in getting started, we found ourselves spinning through the state of "Kansas" past thrifty little villages, a product of Kansas energy, a country threaded here and there, by creeks past young orchards and corn-lands, through the long general slopes of the Arkansas River Valley, where we were at last landed in the picturesque town of "Caldwell," the terminus of a branch of the "Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fé R. R.," and a long overland journey of a hundred and ten miles yet to take.

Here I wanted the center of light, and power to pierce the mists of surroundings. I felt my mind was not capable of grasping with giant power all the difficulties which beset my path, but a certain stoical philosophy under my seeming discomfort soon succumbed to what afterwards proved a small trifle.

"Caldwell" was a busy town of streets and houses, situated on a high plateau, with the typical sniffing of a wild border air about it. Towns, like men, have each necessarily marked features of individuality, and they will be found to illustrate in some degree the characteristics of the people by whom they have been founded, and by whom they are maintained. The view from the main part of the village was bounded only by the limit of vision. There were sights to be seen that were not uninteresting. I seemed to be fascinated, and bewitched at the shifting panorama, as I watched the emigrant caravans, the trains of oxen that would not hurry if they could help it, or turn to the right or left for anybody, after starting for their destination, miles away.

I wonderingly looked at the old-time, swinging, and swaying, storm-beaten stage-coach, that had withstood the bluster of many a relentless winter, with its six horses, and its ever-important, whip-cracking, daring, champion reinsman, lurching up in front of the hotel, one of the most prominent and ambitious buildings, to disgorge passengers that had been pitched, rolled, and jostled with ferocious velocity in this machine of torture, as it groaned, and labored down through ruts, and up over sand-banks for two hundred miles; besides passing through the uncertainty of stage-driving in that exciting country. The horn-blowing, by the brave, reckless, rollicking, leather-leggin'd commander of the prairie-ship, announcing the arrival and departure of mail, was an event which was a source of daily excitement and unusual commotion in the business center of this frontier town that was fast making a record of killings, and in bloody deeds has few equals in western history.

The mayor of the place was a man by the name of "Mike Meagher" who had killed a stage-driver, "Sil Powell," while marshal of Wichita several years before. Jim Talbot was the renowned, dashing king of Kansas and Indian Territory outlaws, who had been the chum of Powell from early boyhood. The Caldwell marshal had just locked up several of Talbot's gang, and the latter sent word to the mayor that they must be released. Meagher told the marshal of Talbot's demand and ordered him to stand firm. This the marshal did. Hearing of this Talbot said—

"If my boys are not out of jail to-morrow morning I'll burn down the town and shoot 'Mike Meagher' through and through till he'll look like the lid of a pepper-box." Talbot's warning soon spread, everybody knew he was a man of his word, a desperate fighter, and a "dead shot." That night the town was in a turmoil, and preparations for the battle of the next day were hastily made. At nine o'clock the next morning the trouble began. The mayor retreated behind his saloon, and while the cow-boys were careering wildly through the streets shooting at everything in sight, and the citizens were returning the fire from the housetops, Talbot deliberately walked down the alley until he caught sight of the mayor. The latter was a sure shot but for once he missed his aim. The cow-boy king was more fortunate. He raised his revolver deliberately and pulled the trigger. There was a flash, followed by a report, and the bullet sent Mayor Meagher's soul into eternity. After the killing Talbot at once rallied his men with a wild cry and soon the desperate cavalcade dashed out of town across the country and south into the territory, followed by a posse of enraged citizens.

During the fight in the streets and on the prairie sixteen people were killed.

In no little trepidation I took a seat on the long line of veranda that projected over the front pavement of the hostelry, and there for a good hour watched the novel picture of human life that passed over the street, and viewed with interest the cosmopolitan phases of humanity which were to be seen on this Bowery of the West, a glittering, dazzling, flashing array it was. It would be an endless task to describe all the varieties, for I saw so many queer sights. "Caldwell" was at the zenith of her glory, and the far West was resplendent with rainbows of promise. I discerned the print of the deer-skin-moccasin, and the French-kid slipper, side by side, while, strangely contrasting with the wild garb and manner of the frontier, I saw everywhere the luxury and polish of modern refinement. Omnibuses were rattling to and fro, delivering their freights of well-dressed men, and women, all playing their parts in the noisy and animated scene, and the illustrations of its people gave an additional interest above their novelty.

I idly studied strange personages that glided about through the narrow corridors and apartments trying to make out from their dress and manner their various relations.

Who was the almost perfect-appearing man, with such an expression of lofty integrity, and quick military tread, that started me to moralizing. Something in the air of his free, firm step, and bold, yet graceful abandon of carriage, and his fine stature that awakened at the first glance, disagreeable impressions of interest in him. He seemed to enjoy the happiness in believing oneself in possession of what is best in the world. He had a brass-band-street-parade look, as he quickly turned his head, with a sort of leer in his eye, at the approach of each rustling sound that passed. A feeling involuntarily crept over me, that this self-worshiper that bespoke hades in every curve and smirk, with ideas that never wandered beyond his own horned and cloven-footed personality, needed delicately-gilded, white-satin-lined, elevated transportation, with guards and soldiers, to protect him from the ravages of the smiles he was soliciting. Woe, I thought, to the fair dame, who, beguiled by this man's smooth tongue, and suave manner, that refused to turn aside, returned his gaze, or permitted herself to become entangled. Innocent or guilty, her social fate if she had any, would be sealed, for the manner of his life must be such as to confer anything but honor by his notice. Weak creatures might fight for his favors while living, but when he died none would regret him. Then there was that choice product, the intelligent, agreeable gentleman, possessed of a laudable ambition to aid in building up the glorious West and a firm believer in the future of "Oklahoma" and an inimitable raconteur. The wild, picturesque, heavily-armed, desperate type of characters, who wore an extra thickness of belt wound around them to better secure their weapons, and I thought to increase their portliness and importance, as they marched grandiosely along, for their life seemed but one continuous round of idyllic carelessness of any law except pleasure, while the reckless way they handled their six-shooters made me the least bit nervous as they twirled them around their fore-finger eloquently, but too playfully, apparently compelling the only too-willing crowd to drink with them. Surely in no place but the West could this true western tough exist. He was indigenous to its exhilarating air, its freedom of social customs, its cosmopolitanism, its leniency in the prosecution of offenders against the law. A combination of bravado, lack of conscience and general cussedness, that would neither toil nor spin.

I overheard one, a flashy-looking young man with much swagger, dressed fancifully in velveteen and vest, with light riding trousers, wearing a big-wheeled spur attached to his high-heeled, tiny boot, and carrying a portable arsenal, say, as he addressed an acquaintance, with an air of lofty indifference hovering about his features: "Oh, yes, just come up, dangerous road, people that go that way pillow their heads on coyotes, with teeth a foot long. Why," said this facetious individual, "the cattle-boys in that country down there, driving their herds, use the black-striped-panther, for shirt-studs."

The appearance of the party of men assembled, who sat with their feet dangling over the arms of the chairs, or hung about the walk outside, was in perfect harmony with the time and place, all of them religiously obeying the two before-mentioned characteristics of the people of the town, for gambling was carried on, and the air was full of stories of gains, and losses, and high play, while the garish display of diamonds lighted up the street and sidewalk.

I had been sitting for some time, in a fit of mental abstraction, leaning on my elbows with my chin between my hands, when I suddenly felt myself jostled, and, on looking up, discovered an ambiguous individual, who proved to be a gypsy woman, with a flashing red and yellow handkerchief about her head, standing beside me; with a strange, silvery, hoarse voice, and, without warning, or premonition, she was saying: "My pretty lady, to tell your fortin, ma'm, for you have a merry eye, my lady, and surprises is in store for you, connected with a dark man as loves you better than you love a kiss in a dark corner when the moon's a-shinin' for the luck of the fortin, as the gypsy will read true from the lines of your hand, my lady, both as to what is past and present and to come, if you will cross your poor gypsy's hand with a little bit of silver."

Aroused from the shifting scenes around me, and waiting for a lull in the monotonous tones of my surprise, I kindly answered "my mysterious visitant" by telling her we were all phantoms of a day, that life was short, but a breath, a sigh, a fleeting shadow, and that I had been perpetually on the edge of a yawning abyss for so many years, in a ship with creaking masts, and strained timbers, fighting against the assailing billows that crested a storm-tossed sea, to have this snowy-sail, treasure-freighted bark, go down in a tranced summer calm, shoaled on treacherous sands, sucked into the swift whirling vortex, and if she would but excuse me, I did not care to be fed on heroic sorrows, hopeless agony, and other poetical condiments of the same serious nature; for I had just borrowed two silver dollars, and walked three blocks to see the new-moon over my right shoulder the night before, and I was then enjoying a brief season of bewildering felicitation.

She was not persistent, but passed on to a party near by who had evidently never been surrounded by the full glare of enlightenment, but had the appearance of having been raised on the outskirts of some little town, amidst red beans, and yellow pumpkin blossoms.

At night as we passed along, the sounds of song and boisterous revelry, coming from cellars and grog-shops, the gusts of string music bursting from ball-room windows, past which whirled couple after couple, gauzy-skirted blond-wigged beauties in crushed, faded canary's breath and blue-atmosphere, draped, and looped, with invisible angels' sighs, gliding through the giddy waltz, all proclaimed that they were fast approaching their wonted climax of gayety, and uproariousness, in their terpsichorean excesses, and that menials of all grades and classes were in the full enjoyment of their gratuities. While love rules the court, the camp, the grove, there seemed to be an emergency clause, tacked to it in this region of paradise, for two feminine creatures, fascinatingly repulsive, one with emendations, and alterations made by the other with, perhaps, an Indian bat, the other heightened by dispensary bandages, were still threatening to "yank" each other for the favors of the man who stood looking at either charmer with a puzzled expression as though wondering why Providence had bestowed upon him the fatal gift of beauty.

It was at this time, and this same place, "George Flaff" was killed.

He was said to be a fine-looking, kid-gloved, daring, desperate bandit; who was an impoverished gambler with a college education, and had been appointed marshal, but his name became such a terror on the border that he was asked to resign the office.

He declined, and with storms of wrath he swore he would run the town to suit himself. That was sufficient. One dark night agents of the conspirators riddled him with bullets.

He had married a woman by the name of "Mary Dearse" the wealthiest girl in the country. This wife, who was said to be a pretty woman, hired detectives to hunt down the slayers of her murderous husband. They also died "with their boots on" very mysteriously. The deputy became marshal. Nobody doubted that he had a hand in the killing of his chief and perhaps fired the fatal shot.

These stories found their way to the ears of the widow and she began to attend dances and concert halls where she could meet him. A few nights before, at one of these balls, the marshal was sitting outside the hall at an open window. During the whirl of a waltz, some one, in passing, fired a pistol. The man was killed instantly.

Nobody ever inquired who did the shooting, but every person seemed to think the widow did it; and when she killed him she put a bad man away.

As one is led by the contagious force of example to join in a round of applause, or a crowd, we found a wagon on the corner in which a man was eating fire, munching glass, and spinning out cotton by the mile, while a band of darkies, with their banjos, to divert the minds of the unwary, was singing,

"Git away from dat window, my love, and my bride,
Get away from dat window I say,
Call around some oder night,
For der'se gwine to be a fight,
Dar'll be razors flying through de air."

The entertainment was exceedingly diverting to the initiated, but expensive to the over-credulous.

Every seeming taste could be gratified, and every humor amused. Lessons of wisdom, or texts for many a useful discourse were developed in rapid succession. Neither to a reflective or thoughtless mind need there have been any approach to ennui. The very mirrors in the whisky dealers' shops protested against it, while in the varying multitude there was a novelty for every minute.

We watched an ingenious lamp-lighted merry-go-round contrivance, and listened to its catchicy waltzing airs, as the mixed element of soldiers, cow-boys, and their female companions (that did not require an expert knowledge to know that they were full of dissipation, and that their lives had probably been cast in rough and evil ways), astride the wonderful array of painted horses, completely circling around, enjoying the sensation.

I confessed that this was a fascination, and that I took rare delight in watching the flight of this gaudy machine, with its cargo of human freight, mounted on magnificent wooden equines, painted brilliant red, with jet black ears, fiery blue eyes, and tails and manes of real green hair, while the hurdy-gurdy music added to the excitement and the charm, as its exhilarating concord of sweet sound, emitted inspiring strains, as it went whirling, and humming, like a big grand top.

Small tents set up around on vacant lots dispensed whisky, tobacco, physic, raisins, and other groceries, while in one a thin-faced traveling evangelist, with a natty dark suit, a white tie, and a hat dextrously pulled over his eyes, was exhorting his fellow-man. Before him was a mob of struggling, tugging, hauling, roaring, hoodlums of the Texas horse-thief-advance-Oklahoma-boomer variety, hallooing "Oh, mamma, come down, come down, git back to your mamma." While the arms of this inspired genius sawed the air in gesticulations, his face growing red with the violence of his exertions no one, not even himself, could hear a word he said. As each of the wild exhilarated listeners succeeded in gaining a point of vantage, between the dots, commas, and climaxes of his discourse, they would bawl out some incoherent western slang, while one of their number, an expert, would swing his lariat-noose a few times high in the air, as a threat that he would be "roped" if he didn't desist. The grizzled chin whisker of this unique product, would fairly quiver with stern indignation, as he tried to maintain his dignity against both this disrespectful diversion, and the illuminated canvas museum next door, that had other natural curiosities, for there was the "electric girl," an "armless man," a "fat boy," and the "skeleton dude," proving strong competition, as the fakir with yellow tickets in hand was filling the air with, "Now, ladies and gentlemen, the great show of the earth is open. This is the only thing of its kind on this side of the water. Animals and curiosities collected from all climes of the globe. This is the opportunity of your life—you must not miss it—you must not pass by. You will never see again what I have here to show you, ladies and gentlemen. This great show is going on now. It is going on this very minute. It is one of the wonders of the world. Just behind me, ladies and gentlemen, just behind this curtain is the wild man. He was captured"—but as we were expecting to see a great many that had not been, we denied ourselves this invitation to enjoy a glorious moon that was near to her full, sailing in the azure firmament, her soft light lending the enchantment of mystery to this Western scene. There was a suspicion of what was coming, for the next morning we saw a blanket frame and the dusky face of a red man, and without doubt the genuine article, for he looked duly sworn and attested to, stamped, sealed, and delivered, with his flowing hair, and all sorts of toggery covering.

CHAPTER II.

As we had not yet been initiated into a jolting, jostling, fatiguing stage-ride, relays were sent in advance, and we were to travel as tourists, at sightseeing, in a more comfortable conveyance, affording us by turns an agreeable relief from the irksomeness of long confinement in a lumbering vehicle. We started at high noon that we might reach "Pond Creek," the first ranch, by night. We stepped from a bustling town into a silent desert. The valley was vast and solemn, under the heat of a shining sun and limitless space. This first twenty-five miles of the journey were uneventful, except that we had passed from the "white man's country."

Two miles from "Caldwell," the boundary line of Kansas is reached and the road strikes into the Indian Territory, over an old cattle trail. All beyond was a region of dreams and uncertainties. A thousand tales of the legendary past came up before me, as the last traces of civilization had disappeared. I felt that we were moving off in the midst of solitude, silence, and desolation, yet our bits of talk gave us a feeling of companionship, as we sped along under the varying tints and shadows of the heavens. The main-land was high and rolling, with ugly, precipitous gulches and wash-outs. We watered the horses at "Polecat" a deserted stage station, and as evening advanced, with the departing sunlight came to a standstill at "Pond Creek," a narrow little stream in its sane moments but a foaming torrent after a rain. Its banks were thick-grown with the cotton-wood, and while we found the ford safe to cross, the water was rising.

"Pond Creek Station." This far-away retreat seemed not to promise much, yet it was rather elaborate in its furnishings, luxuriating in a carpet on one floor, having unbleached cotton for covered walls, while the wife of the proprietor, a little woman with bright sharp eyes, sat in the shade of a morning-glory lattice, and a song-bird warbled in a wild-cane cage. On a post near the door hung strings of red peppers, three or four feet long. The scarlet pods being especially kept to order for the "bravo Mexicanios" with brigand connections.

The house was a story and a half rambling frame abode, with little wings and angles, and rooms of various tiny dimensions. We saw evidences of practical activity as we reined up in front, for it was a stage station, and the driver of a six-horse coach with passengers for "Forts Reno and Sill," with the four and hind boots filled with the mail and baggage, had cracked his whip and gone bowling away. The artistic passage around the veranda was lumbered with sacks, bags, shovels, blankets, lariats, saddles, and various cow-boy belongings, tossed about in charming confusion, and as we entered the front room and office, and a place of great importance to this caravansary, our vision ranged over what seemed to be an animated arsenal of shooting weapons and bowie knives, affecting the true frontier style.

A handful of blue and white ivories, which proved to be a "jackpot," were stacked in the center of a table, while gathered about, playing the deleterious game of poker, was a group of men that had cowardly countenances, and yet dare-devil manners, which characterize the cut-throat and bravo. The room was filled with a most remarkable aggregation of desperadoes, stage-robbers, roving bands of stock-thieves, gamblers, and professional killers, that looked like they would fight a buzz-saw in full motion, or assassinate you without diverging noticeably from the fact. Certainly the place afforded a most favorable opportunity to study the customs and manners of the crude phases of human nature in life. Bottles were lodged all along the white-washed beams, a sorry-looking comb and brush decorated a small toilet stand, and breech-loading rifles and stacks of other arms stood in one corner.

"Open her to the limit," said one of the men, whose necktie was exceedingly boisterous, flashing at us as we entered the door, while we caught the quick movement as he placed a formidable weapon in front of him.

"I'll see that," grinned another fierce, red-eyed westerner, with a resemblance to the "man who broke the bank at Monte Carlo," as he saw the raise and went it fifty better.

"I'm with you," murmured a third, as he looked across his brace of pistols and buckled his cartridge-box to make it secure.

"Ef I had a herd of steers, wouldn't I sling 'em ears and all a-top o' that pile," was a greeting that warned us to dally not but to pass on, which we did, feeling that our life was not worth the fraction of a penny, and fully expecting some one of the number to give an exhibition of his skill by popping at our valises and various bundles, and with a wild *pas seul* snuff a lighted cigar held in the mouth of one of the party; for we had no doubt that many men had made a hasty exist from life, as the results of these bandits' thoroughly business methods, although my mind had been relieved somewhat by the assurance that two desperadoes by the name of "Brown and Wheeler" that had been terrorizing the Southwest were no more. These characters with their Winchesters, and six-shooters had been holding up cattlemen, and publicly robbing everybody.

We were told the last seen of them in Caldwell was when they went riding away toward the "Cherokee strip" ostensibly after horse-thieves. On the way they were joined by two notorious cow-boys and the four rode into "Medicine Lodge" and dismounted in front of the national bank. The president and cashier refused to be robbed, so the outlaws killed them both, mounted their horses and made for the cedar canyons, pursued by a posse under the command of a noted cattleman named Barney O'Connor. They were captured and hanged by a mob at Medicine Lodge. We soon found ourselves sitting on a long bench contemplating a repast which had been laid to order, for we were Government people, and after we reached the dividing line of civilization we were looked upon as "big chiefs" from Washington. The white-blossom lattice was utilized as a dining-room, for, however indifferent to ventilation he may be in his windowless sleeping-room, the rancher insists upon fresh air and plenty of it with his meals. All kinds of game, meats, vegetables, preserves, canned fruits, sweetmeats, and *hors d'œuvres* had been abundantly provided, while a buxom girl, with a martial air, waited at the feast.

One who is a keen observer and civil enough to keep prejudices out of sight, need not notice the woe-begone appearances of surroundings; so, if the best two-by-four room assigned to through passengers looked far from inviting to the most weary traveler, every one seemed cheerful. Hammocks were hung everywhere; in the hall, the dining-room, and along the length of the veranda to catch every breeze that was blowing, so that any number of unexpected guests could be strung up for the night without inconvenience. Nothing was any trouble. All that they had, all the best they possessed was freely tendered to us as long as we were sheltered by their roof. They tried to make everything so graciously charming that we almost concluded that "Pond Creek" was only a modest way of covering up the location of a most delightfully breezy, fresh, and up-to-date hostelry, proving a certain rude code of ethics about border chivalry.

There was one old character that seemed to be the major-domo whom I at once became interested in. He was indigenous to the surrounding country and a walking Town's Topics for current information, while his mind was an immense store-house of Indian reminiscences, traditions, and latest barbarities—an oracle, and cyclopædia of uncertain truths founded on facts combined, as it were. While surrounded by an open space covered with boxes, broken barrels, tin cans, and every other variety of rubbish, he seemed inclined to pay me at least the compliments of curiosity, and as the twilight had darkened upon us unperceived, I noticed him leaning over a little old rickety gate in front of where I sat, leisurely smoking a remarkably colored stump of a pipe; while he looked altogether about as hard a customer as you would wish to see. His was a tale of pitiful woe; a history of wrecked fortunes and dismal ruins; a story of blasted hopes, and relentless fate. A shabby genteel hat covered his grizzly hair, and shaded his unshaven face, while his limbs were draped in butternut of a peculiar style of cut. Cold facts had probably demonstrated to him the difference between a flush and four aces, and his weary, burdensome, woe-smitten countenance showed the effect of having imbibed in strong mixtures, undoubtedly used as a disinfectant or anti-malarious agent tending to neutralize the effects of the damp air of Pond Creek; but I found him full of grewsome cheer.

"Ah, Mrs. —— I suppose," he said, addressing me. "God be praised, madame, are you going among the dreaded Indians below us?" I told him that I was. With seeming reluctance he mysteriously showed me two rifle bullets that had passed through a wagon that was traveling along the same road we were to take, and with consternation depicted in every lineament of his brown, wrinkled face, he told how the Indians charged down upon the parties, delivering a volley of arrows at them as they rode by, causing their hearts' blood to run in rivulets, while the recital made mine stand still, and the shivers to scurry up and down and around my being.

I began to wonder if this habitué that had heard of this blood-curdling disaster and passed through so many exposures to be landed back into the valley of the shadow of misfortune and ill-luck, was not then living in a feverish, unhealthy atmosphere in which lunacy could be easily developed.

He quietly but tragically protested that no one was beyond the pale of danger who went that way, and if we were fortunate enough to escape being killed by the savages a more horrible taking-off awaited us, for a whole battalion of beasts would follow in our dusty wake and crush us into a shapeless mass.

The conversation at about this time having assumed rather a harrowing tone, and as the bull-frogs down by the pond filled the air with their croaks, the wolves around us were howling a requiem, and the katydids and bats had come out to disturb the stillness of the night, I was led away by the sound of the gamblers' chips, through a dark passageway, up a pair of narrow stairs, into a room to rest; but, in anxious trepidation and anticipation, what was I to do? This crowd of boisterous, enterprising characters that kept no count of time, could send a stray bullet through the thin floor and find me anywhere. I slept, but the imprint of waking thoughts did not vanish in slumber. During the long hours of the night, shots were fired—a veritable fusilade of bangs. My fevered fancy conjured up visions of armed men standing in every dark corner. I remembered nothing except a succession of the wildest inimicable suffering. I was in water to my chin, dying of thirst, yet unable to drink; I was chained to a rock, the vultures forever preying on my vitals; I was stretched on a rack, while Indians came with red-hot pincers and tore out bits of flesh. While really a skirmish entertainment of electrified chain lightning had been going on all night, I was not surprised to learn that my Munchausen acquaintance had a reputation, even among those who were not divided by any distinction of caste, for thrilling and impossible tales, for it was said he was one of those imperturbable persons who never manifested surprise at the narration of the most startling facts by others, but always had at his tongue's end an apropos incident in his own experience, which threw all others far in the shade.

CHAPTER III.

A BRIGHT sunlight morning came, after passing through such horrors, with glad awakening, and we prepared to start on our way, when we were told that the Salt Fork River, a mile beyond, was too high to cross.

This startling announcement, as may be imagined, caused me most serious apprehension and alarm. I felt despair creeping upon me, both at the prospect of remaining over, and at the fear of fording a quicksand bottom river. My fright was founded on stories I had heard that covered vehicles, in attempting to cross when the water was high, had sunk, and gone out of sight, and that it was a common thing for freighters to drive their mules back and forth from one side to the other, to pack the sand before venturing with their goods.

Gathered on a level stretch of prairie crowning the divide, stood two or three big wagons, filled with bedding and cooking and camp utensils, while fires were burning, and kettles swinging preparatory to a morning meal. A line of cow-boys, every man yelling like an Indian, and every horse doing his best in a half-mile race across the far-stretching plain of gulches and draws, were throwing their ropes around the heads and legs of lusty young calves; while a flame of sage-brush was heating the branding-iron to a dull red, and the hieroglyphic signs which mark the ownership of the victims were busy burning into the animal's hide. The circling cow-boy riders, big herds of noisy cattle, of thousands slowly drifting around harvesting the rich grass beneath their noses before making for the big water half a league away, bands of led-horses for the riders, and the wild western landscape, all combined to make a thrilling scene.

The general cattle round-up of a district required from sixty to one hundred cow-boys, and from three hundred to five hundred cow-ponies. This many men were just completing their work near Pond Creek, and most of them had gathered at the station. They were typical in their corduroy pantaloons, high-heeled boots, with tops extending half-way up their thighs. Their vicious-looking, jingling spurs attached, their white sombreros of umbrella-size shading their eyes, their cartridge belts and Winchesters lying across the horns of their saddles, made the *tout ensemble* of these Arabs of the plains formidable to look upon. They were not, however, the rougher element of their class, but could, like the wildest of them, ride anything from a half-grown calf to a bucking mule. Being anxious about our crossing such a dangerous stream of quicksand that was liable to swallow up horses, carriage, and all living life within, if we attempted to ford, the entire number followed us to the water's edge. It was thick with yellow mud and flowed high up the bank. After the inspection of one considered the best to judge, and another that examined the place marked the night before, several dashed in on their bronchos, but as suddenly turned round again. While we were debating in our minds what should be done, one of the number gallantly offered his services as guide to see us safely over this booming tide. Dark and dreadful, wide like an ocean, winding far away, with treeless banks, breaking through uprising sand-hills, this river may have awakened the softest melodies of the musician's heart, and the wildest rhapsodies of the poet's brain. But as we plowed through sandy stretches and cast our eye on this sheet of water, we could but feel that a ship or a Mississippi steamboat would be a more appropriate craft to carry us over than a wheeled vehicle.

Six horses harnessed to a heavy freight wagon were brought into service, and trunks used for high seats. While these preparations were going on, Maria (the negro culinary department) was exclaiming at the top of her voice, "Lawd Gawd! Miss . . . . I can't sot thar, I declare fo' de Lawd if I go in thar I'll fall, and swallow water so fast I'll be sho' dead 'fore I strike bottom. I sho' said fo' I left home, I gwine put my trust in de Lawd, but what's I gwine to do now?"

But with all confidence in the pilot, we slowly descended into the flood. Up—up the water came, over the sides and into the wagon. We were perched on such dizzy heights with our feet under us, that if we did not go down we were liable to be carried away with the current.

The water dashed over the horses' backs, and up to the top of the wagon-bed. Surely the horses were swimming! My own danger was forgotten in the fear of losing my black companion, who, for the time being, and to all intents and purposes, had become entirely deranged. The water was an angry seething mass, but with trusty horses and a cool nerve the reinsman steered us through to the opposite shore without loss of life, but a complete rending to rags of the chef's constitution. My gift to our courteous guide was a "Title Deed to the right of Gratitude." We were drabbled and wet, and, on examination, found mud and water sticking to everything, and the contents of the trunks soaked.

Our party proceeded, and we were now crossing the famous Cherokee strip brought into notice by the controversy over cattle leases.

Following the eye to the end of vision, not a single tree or object could be seen to break the monotony of this buffalo wallow grass pasturage. A few years past one could travel for days in this region, through vast almost unbroken herds of these wild animals. They roamed in such numbers that, grazing upon the plains, they darkened it at every hand. The Indians would kill fifteen thousand to twenty thousand in every two or three days' hunt. The squaws following after and skinning the animals. It is said the enormous, almost incredible, number of four million were killed in the short space of three years. The Indians' dream of the beatitudes of the Spirit-land was here almost realized.

The Cheyenne and Arrapahoes have a tradition, which is a religious belief, that the buffalo comes out of two holes from the bowels of the earth, and this they will tell you, sacredly believing that they have seen them come from these places in countless numbers. But the Indian was relentless, and the buffalo has gone to a happier grazing ground, to that "bourne from which no bison returns."

We enjoyed the ride, yet an inexpressible sense of remoteness and loneliness was over all. One needs to make the journey from one ocean to the other before he can form any conception of the immensity and diversity of this vast domain. All was silence—above, the flawless blue; below, those seemingly illimitable plains of reddish yellow, streaked with alkali white, that swam back and forth before the eyes in parallel lines until far off they melted into a long, low stretch of shimmering light. We crossed a branch of the Salt Fork of the Arkansas River; a stream full of mud and quicksand, where the broad, swift-moving ribbon of water made the horses halt. The road ran through fertile country, then through barren stony tracts of old beds of cacti, to show that the sandy soil held in it an element of life.

A suggestion of something to eat and drink caused us to pause at the first water to dine. The sun beating down, we were without even a clump of black-jack or sage-brush for shade. A speck on the vista of landscape and skyscape I felt that this was not only an arduous undertaking of travel, but a hazard of life, and that we could never feel in peace and security, or relish a repast as we tarried by a trail marked by human blood, bleached buffalo bones, and the graves of the mutilated victims of Indians. We were breathing the aroma of human life and dangers in an atmosphere of tragic associations, and I fully expected my sandwich to be carried away by the unerring aim of an arrow, see every blade of grass turned into life and feathers, and hear the clear rippling water yell out a war-whoop, for we were really entering upon that historic desolation not by inference and ignorance, but actually. I was apprehensive of a surprise, a massacre, a capture, a torture of terrifying and heart-breaking detail, for we were without escort, and herds of antelope, the gracefullest and nimblest of the denizens of perpetual silence and unbroken peace, grazing off in the distance were our only sentinels. I thought of my corpse as it lay blackening in the sun, with the glossy ravens perched on my scalpless head, plucking my eyes. The foul buzzards stalking around, a guiding star to the prairie wolves, the gray thieves of the wilderness, yelping their night watch, ready to tear me to pieces. But we continued our journey unmolested, riding along miles of prairie-dog towns on each side of us.

These little creatures would sit in the blazing sun, upon their haunches, and with pert curiosity stare, bark and blink at us; then, with tails up, dart into their sand-mounds, hiding to join their rattlesnake companions that, occupied the same abode, leaving the little long-feet, burrowing owl-partner sitting motionless, or, if scared, spreading its tiny brown wings and circling around a few times over head, sinking back again, eyes looking and wonderingly asking if we were going to compel it to fly. We wondered if this bird could be mentally balanced to take up its residence and make a confidential friend of the rattlesnake. It uttered a low chattering sound, and would start and skim swiftly over from one burrow to another, and then all at once dive into the depths out of sight to feed on mice, crickets and young and tender prairie-dogs, while close inspection revealed one or more loathsome reptiles slowly creeping down a hole. Foxes, swifts, badgers and skunks also lurked about these dog-towns with the sorry, hungry-looking coyote.

We would occasionally catch a glimpse of one of these long, slim, gray, scrawny animals leisurely trotting across the level plain before us.

As evening approached, with its flickering shadows, and we were quietly passing or musing upon things not of this world, and dreaming that in the great, far-distant planets, perhaps beings of an unknown race might be looking down across the great space at us, we heard hideous, murderous, blood-curdling, vicious cries that reverberated over the painful stillness. We were sure that emigrants were battling for their lives, but our fears were quieted with the information that it was only the howl of a pack of coyotes. We were wondering if the sonorous and prolonged jubilant howl proclaimed that they had just concluded a repast on some unusually toothsome traveler, or was the wailing tone of lamentation over the invasion of their country, when we halted in front of a camp where the air was murky and odorous around a smoking fire, and a man of gigantic size and swarthy face, dressed in the unpretending garments of a respectable weather-beaten freighter, was unhitching four refractory mules, growing more than ordinarily emphatic in picturesque language as he did so, while a companion gave us an inquiring look as he preciously disposed of coffee-pot, frying-pan, and similar bric-a-brac from a canvas bag. I was so impressed with the diabolical noises that seemed to have permeated the very heavens and earth, that I ventured to inform myself as to the character and customs of some of these prairie inhabitants. After a few preliminaries about the swift-running, creeping, howling variety, I asked one of these sturdy-looking men if the skunk was really a dangerous animal, for I had heard that there was one species of this unpopular tribe that was as much to be dreaded as a rattlesnake.

"Yes, sir'ee, I should say so," said the westerner, that had permitted his beard full sway, answering me in a deep gruff tone. "Why, it was one night last summer," he continued, "when we were camping right here on this prairie, and the sharp crackle of our few sticks of burnin' wood was dyin' into embers, I yeered a fellow scream. He said somethin' had bit him, and sure 'nough his leg was bad tore up. Thar was no mistakin' thar was a skunk around, for the air was stiflin' and we knew the infernal varmint had done the deed. In a few days poor Jim died a most horrible death of hydrophoby." I learned afterwards that it was not a rare thing for the bite of these miserable little cats to produce that dreaded ailment, and several well authenticated cases had occurred among Indians, while some people think hydrophobia found its origin in these animals.

CHAPTER IV.

Fifty-two miles from Caldwell we came to Skeleton Ranch. The name was not attractive, and the place looked less so as we approached it. A dingy log house, with roof, and slabs chinked with mud, set in a little cultivated patch of cabbage, in which a doubtful struggle for supremacy was going on between weeds, sunflowers, and vegetables, and in the doorway stood a sad, worn-faced woman, overlooking the melancholy landscape, with an air as dark, and in an attitude as cheerless, as the scenery. While her features were still good, they were fleshless and attenuated, pinched and sharpened. That she lived with her memories, and what those memories were her nervous, almost timorous, bearing testified. She probably carried a load of sorrow at her heart, and a burden of life upon her back. The prospect for a square meal did not look favorable at first view of the cabin, although our appetites were whetted for the occasion, but imagine our surprise, after having partaken of bacon, and potatoes fried in fat the night before, to find in this isolation within, and desolation without—in this spot that looked so forlorn, so apart, one felt that it bore no relation to the rest of the world,—an appetizing, savory dish of spring chicken. The inside of this dwelling was partitioned off into four rooms, and an effort had evidently been made to paper it with pictorial newspapers, showbills, and other professional incidentals. It was a printed landscape that would have caused a most casual observer to give it a second glance, not to say a prolonged one. All sorts of pictures budded and blossomed, and blushed from the wall. Mary Jane, and Arabella smiled, and simpered, in spite of the stain of tobacco juice, which had been unsparingly bestowed around the edge of their originally uncarmined countenances. Leslie and Harper were side issues, acrobats, and ballets were the superior attraction, where the youth and beauty of feminine grace and masculine agility were striving for victory, which, of course, the looker-on had nothing else to do but approve with equal favor and discrimination. This diversion gave the place an air of importance betokening consciousness of their success in making history.

The room assigned us for sleeping quarters was curtained off from the rest of the house by a few strips of calico, while the little square hole of a window was covered by the same razzle-dazzle hue. On an old rickety table in one corner was a cheap coal-oil lamp, that sent out a thin wreath of extremely malodorous smoke, and incidentally a feeble, flickering light, that barely served to show the darkness of the apartment.

The roof was dilapidated, and blue sky was visible through many a ragged rent. It was not an abode where all the arts blossomed, where soft laces draped the windows, and pictures flushed the walls with sunset splendors, and statues gleamed out from before crimson draperies. There were no screens of honeysuckles, or rose-bushes, to lie half conscious of existence, recalling civilized nights of moonlight, mocking-birds, and pleasant dreams, for as sleep spread his peaceful mantle over the troubled world, mosquitoes flew in by double phalanxes, thick and fast, and hovered and floated above. They hummed and sung, and poised their trenchant blades, and settled down, and bit, and sung. In vain we fought and slapped, and covered our heads, for their appetites were insatiable and limited only by their capacity.

My companion read a short dissertation on the mosquito, his life, and habits, and broke the whole ten commandments in one general smash in trying to rid himself of these winged tormentors.

Skeleton Creek was crossed a few yards from this hut, and on we went all day long, passing out of the Cherokee strip, west of the Osage reservation, and into the famed tract of land known as "Oklahoma."

I felt much pleasure in having our party believe that I was supplied with the intelligence of a frontiersman. They would often find my eyes intently fixed on the ground, when if I saw the imprint of horses' hoofs, or wagon tire, I would make known at once that I was on a "trail." If there was a clear defined track, I felt the ability of explaining to them the difference between the claws of a panther and the prints of a marauder, and from the stride-marks in the dust I would easily tell them how many hours we would have to scatter and evade the pursuit if swooped upon in open warfare, or the possibility of encountering a band of warriors, or more likely being cut off by them. How many there were in the party, or, if they had been very much on a rampage, I could guess the length of time that had elapsed since their passing.

I would expatiate on the fact that a party of savages, were simply journeying from place to place, or, by the appearance of the tracks, show the "war gait," they were traveling. During the mysterious explanation of this imagination of keen, skilled observation the darkies' eyes would glisten like white-glazed marbles, until they believed the whole "Cheyenne and Arrapahoe" tribe were in pursuit of us, while their expectant faces revealed dreadful visions, and showed pitiful anxiety, as to whether we would ever live to greet those awaiting us at the other end of our journey.

But as we would near a freighter's camping-ground, I would suggest to Abe, the driver, to rest the beautiful bay horses, that Maria might give us a draught of the pure, clear bubbling water from the spring, before a

" Red Moons," two little girls in buckskin and Elk teeth.

bending wind-flower, or stock of buffalo-grass, could warn us of impending danger.

At frequent intervals along the roadside the expired or still smoking embers of the camp-fires, of the emigrant, or freighter, marked the spot where he had rested for the night. It was not hard to realize that we were passing through a country that was the exclusive property of the red man.

These same smiling, peaceful prairies, had been the silent witnesses of many a tragic deed of blood, and the celebration of barbarous orgies. The savage "Cheyenne and Arrapahoes" had had many a scalp-dance there, and the blood of white man and Indian had mottled the turf.

Yonder, standing alone in its desolation, was a monument of savage iniquity, a spot where occurred one of the most bloody massacres in the history of Cheyenne cruelty, for just at twilight we passed by the side of the trail a weed and grass-covered mound. This was the grave of poor "Hennessey," the brave teamster, and his three companions killed by the savages. These men were in charge of a wagon train loaded with sugar and coffee, for the "Kiowa Indians." The Cheyennes were on the war-path, raiding and plundering, and came on "Hennessey's party." A short distance from "Buffalo Springs," a band of a hundred Cheyennes suddenly sprang up from behind the bluffs, and fired into the wagons. The brave men made up a breastwork of flour bags, and defended themselves with their Winchesters, until their ammunition gave out, when these murderous and treacherous assassins, Little Robe, Stone Calf, Medicine Water, Spotted Horse, Flying Hawk, and their bands, rushed upon them, drew their wagons together, bound the poor creatures to the front wheels of one of them, setting fire to the outfit, mutilating their bodies, stripping them of every particle of raiment, and burning the poor fellows alive. We felt the wickedness of the Indian's power in his own country, and shivered and shuddered as we passed on.

"Bull Foot Stage Station," had a charm of sound, but did not differ materially from those we had left behind, except that it was a stockade structure, built of small logs, set perpendicularly together, as close as their forms would admit, in the ground by digging a ditch two feet deep. The cracks were chinked, poles were laid across the top, sods of prairie grass and dirt took the place of shingles. It was not a place that could take front rank, in point of ability to entertain the wayfarer and stranger within its walls, and provide in the best way for the inner man of denizens luxuriously inclined. For supper we were regaled with a bountiful supply of fried eggs, black coffee, and flap-jacks, or chunks of lard dipped in flour for bread. The food itself was good enough for any hungry body, though one might rationally hope to never get worse. After indulging our appetites to satiety, until our digestive organs ceased their functions on this unwholesome diet, we looked around to find the place nearly destitute of everything in the way of furniture. Over the table hung a picture from some foreign artist, in which bunches of carrots, heads of cabbage, birds newly shot, and fish ready for the pan, were heaped together in sumptuous profusion.

We were weary and desired rest, but how were we to find it? The place offered few attractions by way of comfort. The men composed themselves on the floor, some took to the benches, and some to the few rickety chairs, which had survived their more useful days, while the brave knight of the road slept in his coach, and our own driver in the carriage. The weather was summer hot, and the air within the dirt-daubed cabin oppressive. We were assigned to a little aperture where through a little hole moonlight twinkled all night. The place suggested centipedes, tarantulas, house snakes, and other harmless creeping reptiles.

We were not refreshed after a night's rest at this place, but with the rising of the glorious sun we whirled away, and went spinning along through a most beautiful section of country, a part of the earth the covetous eyes of the boomers rested eagerly upon.

There was trailing along this great high-road, a sprinkling of chronic rovers, that class of beings to be met with on the border, and in all new countries, who are always dissatisfied and forever moving on in search of some ignis-fatuus, they know not what. But the western flow of emigration had not yet commenced its human conflict, although we saw a few white-topped wagons, or prairie schooners, like mammoth snow-winged birds, with sad-looking men and women, journeying together toward the millennium, but with an expression of resignation in the faces of some, and of perfect weariness on the countenance of others, all failing to radiate with evidences of hope; they have probably long since found the land where the wicked have ceased their troubling, and the weary are at rest. We passed many ox-trains nearly a mile long often consisting of thirty or forty wagons, laboring, and stringing southward, and it took skilled management to conduct them.

We knew that one of these single caravans alone frequently carried merchandise of enormous value. The "Wagon-master" of these trains, was the power supreme. To him his employers entrusted thousands of dollars' worth of property, relying upon his honesty, skill and ability, to bring it safely through thousands of miles of foe-infested country, where there was no law to restrain his men.

It was said the employees were required to sign the following: "I agree not to use profane language, not to get drunk, not to gamble, not to treat animals cruelly, and not to do anything else that is incompatible with the conduct of a gentleman, and I agree, if I violate any of the above conditions, to accept my discharge without claiming any pay for my services."

As these trains dragged slowly by from each driver, or bullwhacker, as they were called, was heard the cheery "whoa," as they walked wearily and in silence beside their jaded and overtaxed animals, or stretched at full length upon the tops of their loads, sleeping or half-awake.

While we were aware that intoxicating beverages were prohibited in the Indian country, we wondered at the tremendous consignment of bottled goods in the heavy loads we were constantly passing. The explanation was, that many of the wagons belonged to "Evans Bros., Post Traders at Fort Reno," and although they contended with high water, and all other freighting difficulties and annoyances, it was very seldom so grave a calamity occurred to this well-appointed establishment, as to run out of wet groceries, for this was one branch of necessities most carefully watched, guarded, and pushed through on time at all hazards, for Army posts were exempt from the general stringent rules of the red man.

This firm kept busy two twenty-five team trains (each team consisting of eight mules, and three wagons), besides several ox-trains on the road all the time hauling their immense stocks of goods from the railroad, that embraced almost every conceivable variety of merchandise.

Days and weeks on the road, popping their enormous whips back and forth, back and forth, patient men, and patient beasts, toiling through the hot sun of summer, and the sleet and ice of winter; a more truly imposing sight than these sturdy, bronzed, bearded, wide-hatted swaggering freighters (a type of beings civilization does not produce) driving their oxen and making them obey with a single touch of the lash, could scarcely be found.

At nightfall, as the eye would sweep the horizon, a thin blue column of smoke, and a bright fire, here and there, would tell of their camp. We passed wagons that were arranged in an open circle in the midst of which men were cooking. No cake, no cream, no strawberries, no clean damask. Corn dodgers baked in the ashes, salt pork broiled on the end of a stick, and a big pot of muddy coffee, sufficed for their hungry stomachs. After their animals had browsed they were gathered into the enclosure made by the wagons, and tethered to protect them against prowling wolves, or Indians, while the men, after a weary tramp through a land that held no human habitation, laid themselves down under their wagons to find peaceful beds full of peaceful sleep. It was in this all-around dreary waste of billowy plains, with the burning sun overhead, and not even the remains of an old dug-out in sight or a trail from the main road to show any human being had ever visited the spot, that the dust, the creaking of the wheels, and the ejaculation of the driver of one of these trains was melting away in the distance when we passed an old wagon drawn by a pair of wretched animals. A torn mattress spread on the bottom of the vehicle, and a suspicious black bottle at his side showed the dilapidated looking man holding the reins indifferent to creature comforts, as his lowering, repellent face scowled.

The unconscious sneer about his ugly mouth, however, may have been born simply of a long and thoroughly fruitless struggle with misfortune. It seemed as if there was somewhere within his bulky system a little Sahara, which had absorbed glass after glass, and bottle after bottle, without producing the least visible effect.

One of the party asked this shirt-sleeved tobacco-chewing wanderer what had been his misfortune. "I am just a gentleman, sir, damme, and I am not ashamed of it, sir," he answered, as his lip curled over his teeth like that of a harried dog; "but I took a hand in a game of cards with some damn scoundrels at Caldwell, sir, and they swept everything from me on the face of the earth but a cross-eyed wife and two red-headed children."

Sure enough, there at his side sat a hatchet-faced, stigmatized woman and her offspring, partly confirming his brutal statement. From his appareance he must have indeed been fearfully and wonderfully made. His cup of sorrow, and other cups evidently had been many times and oft overflowing.

The wooded banks of "Turkey Creek" could be followed for miles. Across the endless level of the prairie a speck would appear, when, after a time, it would seem to move as it came toward us, nearer and nearer, defining itself into life, when suddenly reminding us of civilization and humanity. Spots and tints, vaguely recognized would become distinct, while places miles apart began to knit themselves together into objects, and grow to a seeming of the true and complete.

Imagine the lifeless silence that belongs to such a place, not a living creature visible in any direction. You gaze and gaze into immeasurable distance, while the absolute stillness of this great space makes the solemnity almost overawing. One could wander for days beholding the heavens on every side, sinking to contact with the grass, and hearing little beyond his own footfalls. A monster bird would occasionally spring up, stretch his broad wings and, silent as the scene around him, begin to make a circuit in the air, rising higher as he went, with that solemn slow flight, which is the creature's wont when he has been startled by a sound. There was life in the desert now, but there were no lofty oaks or elms to toss their flame-tinted boughs in the summer sunshine. We were surely United States people in the bounding, throbbing West. We saw wild rye and wild oats, swaying like reeds in the breeze. Buffalo grass that grows in mats and tufts, and thousands of wild-plum trees skirted the creeks.

CHAPTER V.

A RIDE of fifteen miles brought us to the "Cimmaron," a wide, swift-current river without bridge or boat. Fears were not to be indulged, and with eyes closed, and all sense of estimated distance obliterated by fright, the sure-footed and trusty horses plunged into this dangerous stream. Our carriage struck the high water-mark as we entered and it stayed with us to the end. The thing tumbled and tossed, first up, and then down, over boulders, and as the water rolled over the dash-board, and threatened to engulf us, it sputtered, and splashed, and whirled around, the waves and spray dashing into our faces. The blood in our veins stood still, as we felt the wheels sink into the yielding sand, but after steady buffeting, we dragged through, and although the pulsation of the heart had quickened, we sped away toward Cheyenne Agency and Fort Reno.

As the "Oklahoma" question had taken the broad direction of a national issue, and General Hatch and his troops had given us so much to think about, we had an opportunity to study the typography of this Oklahoma region, a gracious and beautiful country, a tract of land in the heart of the Territory claimed to be public domain, and open to settlement, containing about fifteen million acres. It is bounded by the Cherokee strip on the North; Sac, and Fox Reservation on the East; Chicksaw Nation on the South, and the Cheyenne Reservation on the West.

It is about one hundred and twenty-five miles long, by from fifty to one hundred and sixteen miles wide. The western boundary line is said to cut across one corner of the brick commissary store building at the Agency. Council Grove was the site selected by Captain Paine's colonists as the coming capitol of the new territory.

It is a spot near the center of Oklahoma, thirty miles from Fort Reno, and situated in the middle of the richest bottom lands along the river. Both banks of this (Canadian River) stream through this country are well timbered. There are continuous groves of black-jack, oak, black-walnut, and cotton-wood, while thousands of acres on both sides of this water will compare for agricultural purposes with any in the world.

Stock-raising is the natural industry of the country, but the soil is deep and rich, capable of producing seventy-five bushels of corn to the acre, and while perhaps it cannot be raised with sufficient regularity to warrant an unfailing crop, and while the statement is invariably made as to the unevenness of the probable yield, this fact is not confined to Oklahoma alone, for the same report often comes from the strictly agricultural counties of Missouri. The country is well adapted to wheat, oats, potatoes, cotton, apples, peaches, and all varieties of fruits. The atmosphere is made of sunshine, and in point of water privileges, transportation facilities, town-site advantages, timber rights, is all that goes to make a new country desirable. With absolute certainty will the rain-fall and settlement of this country go hand in hand from Kansas, across this vast domain, on toward the Pacific.

It is possessed of all the elements for a great and prosperous commonwealth. This region the Government bought of the Creeks and Seminoles at forty-seven cents an acre. The winters are mild with a short season of snow and ice. The summer nights are cool. You can enjoy the delicious air without the discomfort of dew, or danger of colds. You are always assured of a glorious night's sleep under at least one covering. The individual who could find fault with such a climate, would, if merciful Providence gave him the opportunity, grumble at the cut of his angelic robe, growl at the tune of the "G" string on his harp, and find flaws in the jasper-paved streets. When it was a matter of common remark that it was hot enough in New York to melt the hinges of the clanging doors of the lower world, soft breezes were cooling the heated brow of the languorous Cheyenne.

The trail that follows the "North Canadian" through twenty miles of this beautiful land has been made famous in "Star-route annals" being the mail-route from Venita to Albuquerque. This was the famous route which was expedited from twenty-six thousand a year to a hundred and fifty-two thousand, and was the one shown in Congress to have carried over it just sixteen letters in the six months.

In many places in the valleys, and on the slopes of the prairie, the grass will yield at least three tons per acre, and of superior quality.

Here the weary eye searched in vain for those smiling evidences of industry and prosperity, which, on every side, meet one in the States. No quiet farmhouses, surrounded with orchards and fields of waving corn, no white cottages buried in roses, and honeysuckle vines, but only wonderfully remarkable for its vast plain of verdure.

As we were nearing our journey's end, and had reached a high plateau three miles from "Fort Reno" we gazed upon a broad valley extending as far as the eye could reach, a view that revealed a picturesque scene, thousands of conical, white-shaped tepee-homes, set in a poetical elysium of green and waving grasses. What could be more exciting than this tumultuous throb of mingled emotions, and softly creeping fascination of an Indian landscape. A town of Government buildings and traders' stores, the North Canadian, a crooked and short-bending river, running through the center of a flat plain, and only saved from being able to find it by its high banks of sand that glistened in the sunlight. Fort Reno, the formidable Army post, so artistically thrown into this vast space, made us enthusiasts in the midst of savage solitude.

One's ideas of paradise are somewhat shadowy and ill-defined, and distance throws a shadow and lends enchantment. Our ecstasies of admiration were soon dispelled as we neared the Agency, and gazed upon hundreds of acres of bleached and bleaching bones, and whole skeletons, lying on the prairie where the Indians, for a decade of years, had dissected their Government beef ration, and left the only part of the carcass that they could not masticate, as a tempting snare, and delusion feast, for the flying scavengers.

Immense white skulls with horns measuring six feet from tip to tip, leg bones, and ribs, altogether made a ghoulish impression. Birds, and beasts of prey, hovered and slunk toward the scene of carnage from every quarter, and with marvelous powers, discovered the spot where their feast was prepared. In incredible numbers, ravens, buzzards, crows, and others of the same large family wheeled screaming most discordantly in the air, while packs of wolves were secretly watching with impatience for their night banquet.

We had with us Maria and Abe, two worthy negroes of the blackest type, who were born and bred in the South, but had lived on the border of the territory, for several years. They were shrewd, and well-informed on many points, but, while they were ready and willing, and quite capable of meeting variable conditions, they were not prepared to wander across the path of formidable warriors.

There came galloping down the road in the sunshine, towards us, a party of "Cheyennes," whose white sheets, as they approached us, were drawn up around the head leaving only one eye visible.

The first Indian raised his hand, palm front, and moved it backward and forward, as a signal to stop.

They halted, and both through courtesy, and curiosity, we did the same.

Then the same hand moved toward the right, and left, asking "who we were."

There was a concert of "how, how," a clapping of hands over the mouth (an expression of great pleasure at seeing us). They gave a grunting, a welcome, and, with rapid signs, questioned us as to our intentions. In a friendly, sociable, sign-language-way, they asked how long "we had been traveling."

As the covering of one of these bucks slipped from their shoulders, and revealed generously painted faces, with dangling feathered decorations, Maria, with the proverbial terror of her race, who are talented in the direction of frequently and persistently seeing ghosts running loose, and never doubting the existence of disembodied spirits wandering about their old haunts on earth, while they leave grave-stones to themselves, avoid all burying-ground roads after sunset, tremblingly took one look at the wild savages, and became completely demoralized, individually and collectively. She dropped into the bottom of the carriage, screamed once with a force that could have been heard beyond the Canadian, to save her from her enemies.

With the cold sweat of abject terror running down her face, she grew ashen black, and shrieked,

"A fo' Gawd, I'll die, please, for the Lawd's sake, lemme go, jess lemme go back."

She protested against going any farther with the vehemence of superstitious suffering, while she rained down relentless exacting, and unforgiving epithets upon Abe, her husband, for having subjected her to such danger.

The Indian party evidently understood her ravings, for with guttural sounds, and making a wheeling, sweeping motion of the hand over the head (meaning crazy fool), they shot by us, their long lariats trailing behind them like snakes in the dust, yelling a parting war-whoop, that completed their work, which they intended it should.

Poor Maria! There was a great deal of avoirdupois to become limp, and when the revolution of the carriage wheels stopped, I forgot my own tired feeling, and, by dint of force and persuasion, soothed as best I could the poor excited woman back to reason.

"Darlington," is the post-office name for the "Cheyenne and Arrapahoe Government Agency." It is situated in a valley, on the north bank, of the north fork of the Canadian River, a stream without the semblance of a tree on either bank, but every foot of its peaceful margin could tell a tale of daring. The town is laid out in streets and contains the usual number of houses attached to an Indian Agency. The brick commissary store building is sixty by one hundred and twenty feet, ample room for all the stores required. A large cellar for bacon and oil, first story for flour, sugar, coffee, corn, etc., second story for annuity goods, consisting of blankets, pants, coats, vests, shoes, and shirts for men, calico, shoes, and shawls, for women, boys' and girls' clothes and everything pertaining to their schools. A parallel street, following the sweep of the shore, divided the Agent's residence from the sand-margined river. The house was a pretty white style verandahed establishment, giving ample evidence that the essentials of a Government residence could be combined with the comforts and conveniences of a town house. The place was embowered in a park of young, growing cottonwood trees that gave their shade to the immediate neighborhood, which presented a striking contrast to the utter absence of wood on the wide prairie. The employes' houses, neat and comfortable looking, with yards and gardens, had a suggestion of "home-loving-and-abiding." There was a printing-office, too, where the bright newsy little home paper, "The Cheyenne Transporter," issued weekly to its hungry patrons, while a hotel, where a typical landlord, an animated monument of good living and easy times, stood ready to receive you, the culinary pre-eminence being far ahead of every other place of the kind pertaining to gastronomy in those parts. A livery stable, three traders' stores, with cottages for their families, the large Arrapahoe Mission surrounded by a two-acre plat of cottonwood trees, and the Mennonite brick school composed this Government Station, a hundred and ten miles from a railroad.

West of these buildings, extending a mile or so up the river, were hundreds of white tepee Indian homes, where lived many noted warriors. At some seasons of the year, thousands of these savages were in camp in these bottoms in full view.

A mile across the river, the post, Fort Reno, established in 1875, is situated on the summit of a gracefully sloping hill, and is one of the handsomest establishments of its kind in the West, as well as having the reputation of being the second healthiest one in the United States. The climate is perfection itself, its water, air, and other general environments being conducive to extraordinary longevity.

The parade ground is in the center of the enclosure, and here the stars and stripes flutter to the breeze, where they are hoisted every morning at sunrise, and dropped at sunset, attended by the same roll of the drum, and the same reverberations of the evening gun. Large stone, brick, and frame structures, surround it; broad gravel roads with stone walks are between the buildings. On the grassy square, on either side, healthy trees were fast growing to beautify the place.

The residences of the officers are brick and frame cottages, with wide piazzas fronting the drive about the parade ground. To the West a broad road separates the Correll that runs south, past the immense establishment of the Post Traders, conducted by Evans Bros., and noted as being the most enterprising on the frontier, having the largest and best assorted stock of goods in the West. The building it was said cost a fabulous sum owing to the fact that lumber was freighted over two hundred miles. "Caleb T. March," a contractor in New York City, testified before a Congressional Committee that, in 1870, Belknap had offered him the control of the post-tradership at Fort Sill, below Reno, for the purpose of enabling him to extort from John S. Evans, the head of this firm, and who was the actual holder of the place, $3,000 four times a year as the price of continuing in it.

Cannon balls glistening, brass war-pieces flashing in the sun, sentinels pacing up and down, made the scene a pleasure spectacle. We were welcomed to our new home with cordiality. It was with a great sense of relief that the tedious journey was over, but as darkness covered the earth, we were in utter silence save the howling of a thousand dogs, and beating of the Indians' Tom-tom drum. As the stars one by one, peeped forth till the whole heavens were brightly studded, and as the waning moonlight air listened, it appeared to catch up the sounds, and pass them on and on, until you could hear, or seem to hear, them floating lingeringly away for miles. It was weird, and unearthly music, dismal beyond description. Every passing breeze would bring the wildest and most hilarious of all discordant melodies. Then perhaps a tawny throng, with the war-whoop on their tongues, would file by the house like witching shadows from a wrathful past. As the deep stillness of night wore on, the white canvas of the tepees stood out clear and bright in the moonlight.

CHAPTER VI.

The next morning I was suddenly awakened from my dreams, by the sound of the military gun. It was the firing of eighteen cannons at sunrise, announcing the day for the funeral of General Grant." All active business was to be suspended out of respect to the nation's departed hero. The firing every fifteen minutes, was kept up during the entire day, and at sunset, a repetition of eighteen shots took place. It was clear and pleasant, the landscape bore the same features of the day before. We stood admiring this magnificent panorama. The heavens were perfectly serene and pure. The air was limpid, while the horizon appeared to have no other boundaries than those arising from natural curvature of the terrestrial globe.

I looked from my window off and over several acres of plowed ground that had been used for a garden. The sun-flowers had found a fertile soil, and had grown rank and high, while the effect as their faces swung to the sun was a floating mass of yellow bloom.

I soon felt like a helpless foreigner, for I was to be introduced to a few thousand of the aborigines, that, in time, I was to entertain. Knowing the reputation of these all-powerful individuals with the Government, I felt it incumbent to treat them with the greatest respect. My intentions were not to be deficient in any quality of politeness to them.

What a funny ghost-looking lot they were. I saw two scantily-clad apparitions, six feet in height, enveloped from head to foot in white sheets, open the gate, and come leisurely walking toward the house. My first impression, as these impassive speechless beings stalked along the gallery, their sharp, fathomless eyes gleaming out from their covering, was that there had been a conflagration, and these creatures had been left with light clothing, and were coming to report their loss; but, by degrees, it became evident that they were thin, dark-visaged specimens of humanity, ordinarily attired.

Think of the hereditary taste that has turned a few yards of white cotton into a toilet that one might despair of imitating, passing by as noiselessly as a shadow. Others came in with gorgeous coloring that would seem to dazzle the beholder, but fade into a few faint streaks of tarnished paint scarcely perceivable, and often unnoticed until attention was called to it.

I soon learned that these Indians might have nothing of dress on their bodies, or perhaps be resplendent underneath with gaudy trappings.

In either instance a sheet in summer, and a blanket in winter, were indispensable for wrap and covering of a wild Indian buck. Gliding shapes in a graveyard at midnight, their white-robed forms against the stars, could not be more uncanny than these same tall sheet-enveloped creatures stalking through the twilight. There was vanity or taste even in the arrangement of this long white regalia. While some muffled themselves up awkwardly and clumsily, with trailing corners, others threw the white draperies in classic folds about their form, and the grace and naturalness of their adjustment as they gathered them in one hand away from their beaded ankles, revealed splendid specimens of physical strength and symmetry.

I knew the Cheyenne and Arrapahoe Indians, whose history was wrought into legends, were the worst on the continent, nearly all of whom were conspicuous in the fight when Custer attacked "Black-Kettle's camp" of three thousand warriors, extending nearly twenty miles along the Washita River near Fort Reno. Many of this same number afterwards took part in the "Little Big Horn" (Custer) massacre.

They were more aboriginal than any tribe in the territory of the United States, having kept nearly clear of intermarriage with the whites. They possessed in a most remarkable degree the characteristic stoicism of the Indian race, neither fear for their lives, nor the hope of escape, nor despair, nor gratitude for freedom, disturbed, even for a moment, the quiet dignity of their deportment.

There is a difference in the cast of the two tribes. The Cheyenne prides himself on his clear blood, and looks with contempt on his more dissolute brother of of the Arrapahoes. There is really no affiliation between the two tribes, intermarriages rarely occurring, and so they are therefore kept entirely apart. The Arrapahoes preferring to be near Fort Reno and the white settlement, while the Cheyennes occupied the western portion of the reservation toward the Pan Handle of Texas, extending from the Wichita, to the North Fork of the Canadian River.

They were vicious to an extent surprising to those who knew them best. They had never been subdued. They were still fierce and warlike, having never been taught any respect for any Government authority. They rode over the country depredating on every one who might come within their reach. It seemed strange that a few score of young bucks should be allowed to intercept public travel, levy tax on freighters, intimidate, browbeat, and threaten the lives of people quietly passing through the country.

This mode of life, owing to their unsettled and wandering habits, was such as to render their condition one of constant danger and apprehension. Their details for herdsmen were made with as much regularity as the guard details at a military post.

Such men as "Stone-Calf," "Red Moon," "White Shield," "White Horse," "Little Chief," "Little Bear," and hundreds of others refused to come to the Agency for their share of money from cattle leased, or money appropriated by Congress for surplus lands. They ignored all invitations to come to councils, or any friendly gathering of the white man. They even refused to come to Darlington for their weekly rations, preferring to levy on the cattle that were grazing over their vast domain. It was astonishing how they could grow to be such demons, in such a genial soil and climate, healthful atmosphere, sweet and balmy, and radiant.

Orders were to compel these people to work, the only road to civilization. The outlaw bands were still depredating, and, in spite of the sunshine, the very air seemed heavy with hidden sadness, a deepening sense of mystery and pain. I had little confidence in these savages, and my impressions were that I would as soon think of contracting a fondness for a tornado. But I felt that forebodings must cease, and as there were so many things to see and learn among these people my curiosity was on the tip-top of desire. All the chiefs, "Whirlwind," "Powder-Face," "Little-Big-Jake," "Mad-Wolf," "Cloud-Chief," with their followers, great and small, the names that had stirred most fury into my soul, greeted us cordially, but with great dignity and reserve, as they paid their respects. First to the office, then to the residence. The latter official duty was accorded through curiosity, to see if I looked like I would be willing to indulge them the coming year. Their interest centering entirely on something to eat, and having a wide-spread malady, and national reputation of being persistent beggars, the demands of the stomach were incessant, and they were constitutionally hungry.

"Live here, Abe Boid? no indeed, fo' Lawd no," I heard Maria saying after she had caught a glimpse of my visitors. "I 'spec's to leave here fo' de sun goes down if some of dese wild-looking things don't kill me 'fore I gets started. Tell me what is I gwine to do here? 'pears to me dis is a poo' place for white folks and niggers. Let these ugly devils have their good-fur-nuthin' country, I 'clar I gwine back to mine. There's nuthin' past 'em, they won' stop at nuthin'; wold'n 'sprise me to see some of 'em take one of dem axes their handlin' so flip, and go slashin' round here at all of us, and if de good Lawd lets me live, I's not gwine to give' em any more chance than I can help. I tell you I'd be no more 'count, and as dead as I'll ever be, if I see 'em gwine to help you git shet of everything you've got, and the top of your head besides. O no, dey ain't nobody dat I don' seed dat looks like dat I'd stay round. Abe Boid, do you 'spose I'd live round here for them folks to stare up at me wid them eyes shinin' through dat white thing round 'em? fo' Lawd no; I is just as good as dead right now, fo' I'd do it. Dey sho' do look like ghosts. I done been studyin' 'bout dem folks since I fust laid eyes on 'em don de road, and dey skeered de life out of me, and I sho' felt as if sumfin' was broke loose, and giv' way."

I had been hoping that the woman would become quiet from sheer exhaustion, but she seemed to gather strength from her emotions, so I went to Abe's relief with arguments that were fervent, if not convincing, with something like "what is to be will be, if it never comes to pass." The poor woman positively looked pitiful, promised she would try and stand it awhile, but I knew it would be like defying Satan himself, and all his hosts.

Tall, broad-shouldered and muscular, with straight black hair and high cheek-bones, the interest with which I observed these savages was greatly enhanced by the knowledge that they belonged to a tribe that had never been subjugated.

Many of these head-men were like our politicians in some respects, being aspiring statesmen, vieing with each other to be great in council and caucus, and ambitious of a personal following. They loved to assemble in large councils, and awe the young bucks with their superior wisdom and eloquence. No people were more ambitious of martial fame or entertained a higher appreciation for the deeds of a daring and successful warrior, than these savages.

The attainment of such reputation was the paramount, and absorbing object of their lives. A young man was never considered worthy to occupy a seat in council until he had encountered an enemy in battle, and he who could count the greatest number of scalps was the most highly honored by his tribe. This idea was inculcated from their earliest infancy.

As the "flap-door" would open after one of their executive sessions, you knew they had adjourned, and as they were all agitators, under any and all circumstances, it was safe to surmise the thread of discourse had been uninterrupted from the all-around tale of woe, in the same tone of complaint, of one that is oppressed and unappreciated.

Of course these braves were arrayed and decorated in a manner becoming the importance of their surroundings, their faces fantastically and hideously painted, while the long streamers of beads, feathers, mink, and otter fur, hanging from their scalp locks, and trophies dangling at their side, made them scarey objects to look upon.

That the Indian daubs his face in streaked decorations under all ceremonial circumstances, is accounted for by the legend that, "Long ago when men were weak and animals were big and strong, a chief of the red men who lived in the mountains went out to get a deer, for his people were hungry. After walking all day he saw a deer and shot at it, but the arrow was turned aside and wounded a mountain lion, which was also after the deer. When the lion felt the sting of the arrow he jumped up and bounded after the man, who ran for his life. He was almost exhausted, and, when he felt his strength give way, he fell to the ground, calling on the big bear, who is the grandfather of men, to save him. The big bear heard the call and saw that to save the man he had to act quickly, so he scratched his foot and sprinkled his blood over the man. Now no animal will eat of the bear or taste of his blood. So when the lion reached the man he smelled the blood and turned away, but as he did so his foot scraped the face of the man, leaving the marks of his claws on the bloody face. When the man found that he was uninjured, he was so thankful that he left the blood to dry on his face and never washed it at all, but left it until it peeled off. Where the claws of the lion scraped it off there were marks that turned brown in the sun, and where the blood stayed on it was lighter. All braves paint their faces that way with blood and scrape it off in streaks when they hunt or go to war."

Smoking being always a ceremony during weighty discussions, the pipe, and kinekineck played an important part on all occasions. These fascinating adjuncts, were continuously going the rounds, while the warriors performed the pleasant operation in an especially noticeable manner by blowing the first smoke toward the sun, as an offering to the "Great Spirit" and as an invocation, that He might protect them, while with mutterings, and equally imposing demonstrations, smaller whiffs went downward to the earth, and all the time they were sustaining in Cheyenne nomenclature, trusts, combines, and pulls, directing their general remarks to the "departure from specified to ad-valorem duties," declaring themselves for "free sugar, both raw and refined."

They would tell of their own prowess in war, as "Medicine-water," "Stone-calf," "Dull-knife," "Wild-hog," surly, ugly looking scoundrels, that delighted in

Cheyenne tepee camp.

recounting the assault and murder of the German family, a few years ago, when the Cheyennes raided these settlers and captured them all. The father, mother and brothers were tortured and killed before the eyes of the daughters, the two elder girls were brutally ravished, and kept in confinement. The Indians were sent to the Dry-Tortugas for a short time, but the Government soon released them that they might recount their deeds of valor to their young followers.

CHAPTER VII.

THE Indian tepee, or lodge, is made by tying together a number of long poles at the top, then spreading out the lower ends, and sticking them in the ground, making a cone-shaped frame. Canvas is stretched over these wood-ribs, making it secure for all kinds of storms, and from the danger of being overturned. Thousands of these white-spots dot the prairie. The Indian must live in a portable house, so when it comes cleaning time the squaws find it an easy task to break camp, bunch the poles together, tie one end to a pony's neck and start slowly jogging along with the ends dragging far behind over a narrow, winding trail, while the old site is left for vultures, and the sweeping prairie winds to clear up.

Hundreds go moving along in this way, one after another. All their goods are packed on the backs and sides of these little sheep-looking animals. Across the poles, immediately behind the pony, frequently a light wicker-basket in constructed, and it is a sight to inspect the household wares and cooking utensils of these travelers. When a suitable location is found the squaws have their tepees erected in a couple of hours, for two quick-working women can put put up a tepee in five minutes, and take it down in three, and you look over the waste where a new village has suddenly sprung up.

An Indian village will move about fifteen miles a day, as a regular journey, but twice that distance can be traveled over in case of flight, or emergency. The chiefs, or head men, ride ahead, and select the site of the village, and as soon as this is done, they sit, and smoke and watch the squaws put up the lodges. The space in the enclosure of these little homes, is from twenty to twenty-five feet in diameter. We would feel cramped in several of them, but an Indian is lonely in one. The door is an opening of several feet covered by a flap of the canvas. A smoldering fire in the center often fills the place with smoke, and you have to squat low on the ground to be able to breathe. This must have originated the Indian saying "That a white man made a big fire, and sat away off from it, while they made a small one, and got close to it." The Indian has perfect confidence in his neighbor, leaving a stick up against his lodge door, when he goes away on a protracted visit, as a sufficient barrier to intrusion. They are crowded together, however, without regularity, and are shared by the family with their dogs, chickens, and every species of disgusting vermin peculiar to the surroundings.

A winter night in a tepee, is not without its cheerful and entertaining phases. The ruddy flame from the little fire sufficiently lights up the interior, with its quaint surroundings, and quainter occupants, squatted here and there, or lounging lazily around, are blanket-covered bucks with gaudy trappings.

Squaw men, with their shreds, and patches, and weather-stained hunting shirts, and long hair, look quite as uncouth in their own fantastic garb as their companions. The men puff away at pipe, or cigarette, their conversation only coming in, as subordinate to that absorbing occupation.

At intervals, amid the throng, passes a bevy of dark-eyed women, unstayed, and unpadded, but flashily arrayed. Indian finery seen even in a museum has a fascination, but when this finery is worn by "real live" Indians, amid scenes and with ceremonies as picturesque as the people, the effect is marvelously interesting, and "hangs pictures on memory's wall" not soon to be forgotten.

As the wild-looking figures flit to and fro, now strongly marked, and standing out in bold relief against the ruddy glare of the light, and then growing dim and shadowy, as they retire into the gloom, you are impressed with the fact that it is a motley group withal, when perhaps at a few beats of the tom-tom they would all join in the orgy of heathen worship, which was always going on in some of the camps, even if it had caused untold trouble to the Government, and had cost so many human lives. This dance as the flickering light would throw a shadow around the Indian in his breech-clout, and paint, his murderous savage weapons of warfare gleaming with every motion, together with the sound of the drum, and rattle, and the weird chant so utterly unlike anything else that it must be heard to be understood, made a scene picturesque beyond description.

As all the inmates of the neighboring lodges were worked up into an exciting state of body and mind, and became participants, a buck would step out, and start the dance, swaying, and bending to the rhythmic tom-tom, others would join, and commence to circle round, chanting refrains, while the measured tread of moccasined feet would beat time with their rude instruments. After they had worked themselves up to a frenzy, the din would become hideous, almost blood-curdling, when heard from a distance through the still night air.

They would sometimes build a great brush fire near their encampment, that the column of smoke might veil the sky, and penetrate the dome of heaven for it was their peace signal, and they believed that with the smoke their prayers ascended to the Great Father.

The whole atmosphere seemed to invite them to be at home. They made the night hideous with noise of voice, and drum, floating through the air. They danced all night, and they danced all day. I asked permission to attend one of these social gatherings. The frightful hubbub of din I had heard now became deafening loudness. All boys have heard and learned the art of flapping their hands over the mouth to imitate the circus Indian, but it would be impossible to approach a true description of the horribleness of the yells of these leather-lunged savages.

The tepee, profusely and artistically decorated when the revel was at its height, suddenly became the scene of a pantomimic, or spectacular surprise, as many as two or three dozen "artists" took part in the picturesque and weird whirligig, in which grotesquery and color were cleverly subordinated to ingenious and fantastic designs.

Our ears were assailed by the grand swell of the big and little drums, and while comparative repose rested upon me, my eye scanned the costumes of all colors, and kinds blue and amber, green, scarlet and black, and their wearers who were scintillating like stars.

"Two-Bows" seemed to lead in the maze of human color. He was a fine specimen of manhood in the glow of youth, and health, like an impersonation of "Mars," while his companion, "Bright-Eyes," in woven moonbeam trappings of calico, and elk teeth, with her rich color, and fine black eyes, looked "that potent work of God's invention," a comely squaw whom we like to see.

"Tall-Bear," another courtly knight, did the honors to his companion, who was draped in rainbow atmosphere, trimmed in bells, with sparkling leggings drawn over her delicate limbs, while her tender little trampers were encompassed within a pair of soft moccasins. Earrings of iridescent shells, hanging low on her shoulders, completed a symphony of color. So they went flashing, fluttering, a medley of motion, sometimes displaying extraordinary fancy steps, while again their exhibitions illustrated the weird humors of pantomime.

Their movements incomprehensible, with the "Ha-yah," "Ha-yah," "Whoo-aha," "Whoo-aha," issuing from their mouths, their gesticulations and expressions of the face conveyed the idea of the approach of some frightful tragedy. Daubs of brilliant paint on their faces, their dress ornamentally gorgeous, decorations of cut-bead embroidery shining down the sides of their leggings, belts of the gayest colors around their bodies, white eagle feathers flapping with every swaying motion, impressed the beholder. The men were vieing with each other in the costliness of their splendor. While they expressed the mute acknowledgment of a feeling answered, the hidden warning of a feeling scorned, the invitation to come on, or go back, or turn around, all things were done by magic.

They had certainly enlisted the Spirits, and the elements themselves for striking, artistic, and original conceptions.

The plain, old-fashioned, naked sons and daughters of the prairie of early days, had no knowledge of such gaudy trappings, and ostentatious flummery, as bedecked the bucks and belles of that night. If the first settlers in the then sure-enough wilds had met with one of these dandies with his superfine cloth leggings strapped on at both extremities of his person, his shirt manufactured out of buckskin, and fastened around his frame, with leather, beads, and gew-gaws, they would have caught and caged him.

The trader is the great innovator in changing the savage dress, and the Indian certainly sunk from the height of barbarous magnificence, when he adopted the white man's "sunshade." There is something novel and amusing in the grotesque figure of a man in a long, open, white-sheeted robe, with one end gracefully floating in the breeze exposing his shin-bones, carrying a flaming red or yellow-striped parasol, as the crowning effort of elegance.

The Indians congregate together at these traders' stores, the center of barter and exchange, or "swap," and it was often the time for general communication between the remote districts of the reservation, an especial meeting or lounging place for all the personages of dignity and influence, from an Indian chief to a cow-boy.

The traders sold bright-colored muslins and cotton stuffs, "strauding" for blankets, beads, tin-buttons, shells of different kinds for making ear-rings and necklaces, in fact, the stock embraced pretty nearly everything from a bodkin, to a more dangerous weapon.

The whole range of lesser everyday wants turns for fulfilment to the "trader's store," and so it becomes a clustering point for all of government village life. There was no limit to its possibilities. If you wanted anything from a pound of sugar to "an eagle-feather war-bonnet," you knew where to find it.

The trader himself was in some sort a public character. He found himself used in a dozen different ways as banker, hide-inspector, referee, directory, intelligence-man, etc. Gossip, small talk, he could retail with the same graceful alacrity with which he dispensed tobacco and cigarettes. Thoroughly democratic as an institution, "The Store," recognized no caste, and its door swung freely open to all who came, whatever their errands. An inviting haunt for all the idle ones, its fireside, on stormy or impracticable days, drew together its little circle that was ever shifting its character and its subjects, as different persons came and went. The trader could not be in the least exclusive. He was one of those felicitous individuals whom everybody knew.

The large corral was situated two miles and a half from the Agency, across the river. It would hold from two to three thousand head of cattle. Once a week, every Monday morning, there was an issue of a hundred and fifty to two hundred beeves to these Indians, also at the commissary building their rations of coffee, sugar, flour, etc., was given them.

"Red Snake," a Cheyenne squaw and Pappoose,

It was the squaws' duty to receive their government allowance, and the day was a great occasion for them. I often enjoyed watching the crowd as the commissary clerk would issue the substantials of life to these people, while several of the young men of the tribe would distribute the same to the various families, calling them by name, when the head squaw of each would come forward and receive her portion.

Some of the women would have their papooses strapped on their backs, or the little heads of the older ones could be seen peeping over the mother's shoulder, as they were held in place by her bright-colored shawl, where the child rode securely, and apparently without the slightest inconvenience. Many would take from their wagons, or the side of their ponies, a queer, coffin-shaped receptacle cradle, of solid bead-work elaborately ornamented, with that patience and skill which a mother, savage or civilized, loves to expend on the belongings of her offspring, varying with her wealth or taste. As the child was tightly fastened in front with buckskin strings, the mother would stand it up in some out-of-the-way place, or against the side of the building without inconveniencing herself in the least. In the winter these tiny pieces of humanity were swaddled in fawn or wild-cat skin, which enveloped them from head to foot. I never failed to unwrap and admire their little round dark faces, clear bright eyes, and their heavy, thick, black hair, and then examine, in wonder, the infinitesimal beaded bags of medicine, braided in their tiny scalp-locks, and the different kind and shapes of "hocus-pocus," put in, and around, the little precious creatures, to keep away bad angels.

No single photograph, only a series of pictures, could come anywhere near doing the scene justice. Even to these, would be wanting the setting of brilliant sunshine, crystal atmosphere, and cloudless sky, which Oklahoma furnishes.

To stand by, especially on one of these issue days, and watch the ever-shifting mass of brilliant blotches and changing curves, afforded by their blankets, the deep border of red, yellow, and green of their parti-colored garments, with the buckskin and bead-edging of their feet, was enough to make one of artistic taste, but lacking the power of expression, find himself on the border-land between mental vigor and imbecility, in trying to convey to others at a distance any adequate idea of the novelty and curiosity which could so move one's soul. While the sun by day, and the moon by night, would shine in dazzling splendor on the living, moving picture, you would interweave into the dizzy tangle a swarming hive of figures, until the lightning brain buzzed in bewildering sympathy.

The wilder element would stoically poise himself against the side of one of these stores in startling relief, embracing nonchalance and *ennui*, a custom always the same, yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow. These enveloped, sentinel-looking things, would stand for hours without moving an eyelash, with a crevice in the blanket or sheet, as a port-hole for one eye, absorbing sunshine, and from the length of time they would stand in one position they apparently steeped themselves to the full length. Their silent contemplation of what they could see with the one eye was probably dreaming away the disgust with which such methods of surrounding industry inspired them.

The "Caddoes," a semi-civilized tribe of Indians, who lived in small houses, log shanties, and various rude shelters, on the Comanche Reservation, could sometimes be seen mingling in the crowd. These people always presented themselves at such time in their best outfits, dressed with unsparing extravagance.

Their leggings were covered with plates of silver made of Mexican dollars hammered out. Clusters of large and small hoop rings, with rings within rings, adorned their ears, while their arms were literally bound with wide bands of the same metal. Their mingling of mixed blood gave them a graceful and pleasing air, while they were marvels in attire. I would count so many shades of color in their garments within a minute or so, that I would give it up in despair of enumerating them all. They themselves would almost seem lost, and extinguished, under their decorations of long streamers of blue, red, and all the hues of the rainbow. In audacious combinations of color, that nature never was guilty of, their bright gaudy handkerchiefs drawn over their heads, and tied under their chins, with a profusion of beads, shell, and silver, around their neck, made a group of women together, seen at a distance, look like a bed of gorgeous flowers nodding in the breeze.

In spite of these violent contrasts of color, their costumes seemed to be quite in keeping with the complexion of the wearers, and mounted on their fleet ponies, they were more suggestive of Italian brigands, than Indians presenting a like picturesque appearance. The men wore Puritanic hats, with attached streamers of blue and red ribbon that floated to the breeze in every direction. They carried large tobacco bags, made of orange, green, red, and blue, pieces of silk and broadcloth, cut in numberless diamond and square shapes. The cultivated, educated, fine-needle-manipulating American woman could never successfully enter into competition with the intricate patchwork of the "Caddo" women.

Everything happening seemed to be more wonderful to me than anything I had seen before. Hundreds of these wild savages would commence coming in early from all the circuitous by-paths and wandering trails of the prairie. These little guide-roads looked as if they led to no destination, but moved on to the end of time, winding away crookedly, and endlessly, leading somewhere, but never definitely and certainly. One could but help wondering how far some of these bucks had traveled over the trackless waste, to reach their government supplies. We would see one coming with a bridle on his shoulder, which indicated that he might be the owner of two ponies. In his tepee, he had, most likely, a pot, or two, and a few eagle feathers. What more did he want? Government beef was plentiful, and game could be had for the killing. He could not starve if he tried. Why should he work to obtain anything more?

In every direction you could see these galloping pony riders pushing on in company, from one to a dozen, looking like spectral dangers flying in a haunted atmosphere; but, as they drew nearer, and seemed to be regardless of the shining sun, a few perhaps had dropped the sheet from their heads, and they now flapped in the breeze, while their long, black, crazy locks, straight and wiry, floated wildly through the air. They made a fine showing in their war-paint and feathers, on their mettlesome bronchos. Many decorated their bits and bridles with strips of blue and scarlet flannel, and not the least of the most gayly decked of these were the old chiefs, who appeared disposed to be equally conspicuous in field, tepee, or maiden's bower. At the corral the large concourse of Indians assembled, and as the cattle were issued they had an exciting time. The frightened and desperate animals rushed madly around, pursued by from one to a dozen savages. When in the ardor of the chase, they rode like demons, and recked little of danger to life and limb, yelling, whooping, and firing their guns, to remind them of the early days when buffalo hunting was their chief sport. The issue clerk, an army officer and interpreter, were on the ground. Tickets were given to the heads of the different bands, which consisted of about forty-five each.

The beeves were first driven into a chute upon large scales, where ten or twelve were weighed; then they were driven into a narrow passageway, where, from the loud bellow of pain from the poor brutes, you knew the fire brand, "U. S. I. D." had been stamped ineradicably into the animal's quivering hide.

A policeman, or employe, designated an Indian's particular steer, and, as his name was called, the owner proceeded to mark his property by taking a sharp knife and cutting off an ear, tail, or otherwise mutilating the poor animal in a horrible, cold-blooded manner. Then when the Indian, with rifle and revolver ready, presented his ticket to be punched, and, as the gate of the chute was opened, and the maddened cattle were free, their fiendish cruelty commenced. Indians, ponies, dogs, of all ages, sizes, and appearances, started on a race. The bucks would give vent to a series of unearthly yells, goading the bulls with spears, run them hither and thither, many of them being decorated with rags, ropes, and weeds, to show to whom they belonged. Hours were sometimes spent in chasing and wounding these poor defenseless creatures, the red savage purposely wounding the animals to get as many shots at them as possible. Puffs of smoke from the rifle came from all over the plain. For barbarity, and an utter disregard for all humane impulses, this once a week, so-called, "buffalo chase" out-did any bull-fight that ever took place in a "bull-fight" country.

When at length, perhaps tired of this savage sport, a steer that was being slowly tortured to death would fall over from loss of blood, kicking convulsively, the victim was stricken in a vital part, and rolled over struggling and bleeding in the throes of deadly agony, ending the poor beast's misery. But on the Indian would go, right and left, scouring the plain in hot pursuit of the doomed and frightened animals, never halting in the chase, but rushing from one to another, as the beasts shouldered along in their ungainly gallop, down the valleys, and over the bluffs, and across huge gaping rents in the prairie. Many times was an absconding steer chased by my front gate, dragging itself by three legs, or otherwise horribly crippled.

Old squaws, whose bleared eyes, and skinny, wrinkled hideousness, illumined with the glare of some unknown fire, reminding one of the gaunt features of some foul witch from regions damned, would have their wagons ready, with willow branches and saplings, in the bottom. They would take charge of the carcass, and set to work with knives and axes, and slit the throat as scientifically as a butcher-expert, skinning, and dividing the parts, according to the number of families entitled to it, wasting nothing from the skull to the tail. They would stand with their bare arms bathed in warm blood, smearing their faces and hair in their effort to keep their tangled locks out of their eyes, while voracious bucks and their families would drink the warm blood, and eat the raw entrails, their eyes flashing with great satisfaction. The women dried the meat, and the bucks took the hides to the trader.

I stood laughing and chatting with a party of friends on the lawn in front of the house one issue day, watching the maneuvering of a hundred or more of these demons that were dotting the whole country for miles in every direction, chasing their beeves with the speed of the wind, when we were brought up standing, "nautically speaking," by the whizzing of balls through the air, with anything but a pleasant proximity, as bullets went flying to the right of us, to the left of us, all around about, except through us.

It was never fully explained where we went after the scattering, but we retired skillfully and silently, and while there was not much order in going, there was much precipitation, and scarcely a trace could be discovered where we had been, until in the calm we found the bark of the trees, the gallery, and window glass, marked by the rifle balls. I tried to impress upon my army friends that I was perfectly willing to be killed in open battle, but I preferred not to be ambushed in this way. As much as they deprecated the manner in which this issue was conducted, they seemed powerless to order it otherwise.

When the river was swollen high, it would be difficult to conceive of a wilder or more striking scene than to see these ignorant, barbarous, naked, breech-clouted savages, driving two hundred head of cattle, plunge into the foam and roar of a mad river's turbulent water, first to the girth belt, then out of sight, and as the current would seem to sweep the swimming, floating mass into eternity, to have them all appear, puffing and blowing, on the opposite shore. It seemed incredible, and unreal, dismal, uncivilized, and unchristian. For two or three days after the issue of rations the Indians gormandized; the rest of the week they were either dormant, or half starved.

CHAPTER VIII.

"SUFFICIENT unto the day, is the provender thereof," is the frontier housekeeper's motto, and they were in need of great grace, for many a one's heart has gone nigh to breaking in despair. True, the enterprising traders shipped in delicacies of all kinds during their season, and our Fort Reno friends indulged us by sending in grafted peaches as large and fine as ever grew in any country, but we were many miles from any market, and therefore could not be counted on as source of prosperity for some time. We must have crisp, fresh vegetables, and a garden would be required to bring the result to a successful end; so, under the skilful hand and the bright mind of an experienced black agriculturist, a plot of ground, shut off from the Canadian by a fence of thrifty growing cotton-wood trees, was selected. This was a new feature in vegetation, an oasis in the desert, that gave a subtle, foreign aroma, which wild beauty lacked, but nature, exuberant and rewarding, completed the cultivation in a few weeks, which was proof that in this sun-kissed region everything could attain precocious maturity. The results were most satisfactory, and while it was a small individual enterprise, it would have done credit to a more experienced establishment. Here sustenance flourished as delicate and fresh as a flower-patch, in the midst of tom-toms, and other heterogeneous masses of débris, while the loving touch of humanity softened the sounds, and we felt we had unbound the human sheaf, and scattered its ears to all the caprices of chance, and of the winds, that the word "home," and the term "domestic life," had not yet become obsolete. I felt much gratification and pride at receiving the following note, for the gallant soldier and his wife, who were privileged to live and breathe the atmosphere of such an army post as Fort Reno, were supposed to luxuriate on the good eatable things of life, and have at their own command, anything, from watercress to cabbage.

"Capt A. E. W.,
"U. S. Army.

"Dear Mrs. ——

"Will you allow me to put your generosity to the test by asking for some cucumbers and tomatoes, which, if you can spare, please send by our friend, Lieut. R——, who has volunteered to furnish transportation for the same.

"We are coming over soon to help you eat your 'watermelons.'

"Yours very truly,
"A. E. W.
"U. S. A."

As an illustration of the vicissitudes of frontier living, we found there were no thrifty farms to forage for chickens and eggs, and believing life would not be worth the living, or the cooking the eating, without these necessities, I decided at once to go into the poultry business extensively enough to furnish one small family (barring natives). I sent East for fowls and, while we would have been glad at first to have gazed upon the shadow of anything that could lay any egg, I felt my great adaptability to this growing feathered business (forgetting roup, pip, and cholera), hence I could not afford to waste knowledge on the motleys, but must have the pedigreed kind, for was the sunflower not indigenous to the soil, a sure wild crop in dry weather, or wet weather, hot weather, or cool, thriving year in and year out, with no such thing as a failure ever threatening, and was not the seed of this flora, the best chicken-feed in the world ?

In my researches on the subject, I found that the oil from this yellow bloom converted ordinary, dull-looking fowls into shiny, glossy-coated birds, and I thought of what a sunburst of feathers I would have with my fine specimens as they went roaming over the wild prairie with their bosoms aglow with phosphorescent beauty, and how gorgeous they would look with their silken, feathery disks, and bewildering, splendid plumage shimmering with pomp, as they picked their living down "Cheyenne Tepese Avenue," or "Arrapahoe Alley."

The beauties soon came (for they were already this before they had partaken of my promised diet), having traveled in their sack boxes in wagons the hundred and ten miles, but the freighters realized they were well worth taking care of, and so delivered them in good condition. Eggs were in evidence, in great abundance at once, and all callers were requested, and expected, to elaborately expatiate on the merits of my new venture, as well as admire the especial good points of the stock.

I talked chicken-culture, with such a knowing assurance, that I think my friends believed I had devoted many year to this pleasant occupation. The first year I raised two hundred and fifty blooded chickens, that is to say, I did my part theoretically, while Maria, the presiding genius, and Abe, her husband, and several others, brought them to a frying size practically.

Lieut. W—— gave me my beautiful white Pekin ducks, that were as large as geese, but being afraid to trust so valuable a gift on the river, there were little duck-paths and ponds built for their special sportive pleasure. But the venture of raising small ones was not a success, for it was under a gorgeous patch of "Black-eyed-Susans" that forty or fifty of the little yellow-fuzzed-goslings, turned their webs to the sun, and went over to fit-land. We had the pleasant combination of modern comfort, with aboriginal accompaniments. The place was not destitute of a certain homely beauty. This new venture gave a dotted aspect to the abode, the prairies around at this season assumed a peculiar beauty, being actually golden, the flowers, waving in myriads, and of richest colors, in the breeze, besides, there, too,

"The frost was on the punkin' and the fodder in the shock,
And you could hear the kyouck and gobble of the struttin' turkey-cock,
And the cluckin' of my guineas, and the cluckin' of my hens,
And the rooster's hallylooyer, as he tiptoed on the fence.
O it was then, the time, myself, I was feelin' at my best.
With the risin' sun to greet me, from a night of peaceful rest,
As I left the house, bare-headed, and went out to feed my stock,
When the frost was on the punkin' and the fodder in the shock."

All the plains Indians use a sign-language, in appearance something like the deaf and dumb. Instead of spelling out the words, Indian expressions are demonstrated by the object. For instance, the first two fingers of the right hand crossed perpendicularly over the first finger of the left, signifies a man riding a horse. The right hand whirled around several times over the forehead, means the person addressed is a fool, or crazy. The hands open, palms upward, carried from front and center of body to each side, held horizontal, and motionless indicating "all open" is the sign for "day."

Their signs are wonderfully suggestive. I had never interested myself in any of the Indian languages, but I soon found great pleasure in making my friends understand my fingers. Some of my callers were beautifully graceful in their sweeping motions, and it was a pleasure to watch the mysteriously wild, strangely imposing figures, keep their hands rapidly but silently speaking. It is a most remarkable fact, that although the Cheyenne and Arrapahoes have been firmest friends, and have fought the same enemies, made the same friends, and occupied the same country, and conducted themselves in every way (but intermarriages) as one and the same tribe, there are very few in all the number that can hold the most ordinary conversation in the language of the other. Each tribe uses its own language to communicate with its own people, but uses the sign language to talk to the other.

At most any time "Old Surveyor" could be seen wandering around the settlement, or off over the wide prairie, practically demonstrating his supposed calling. He was one of the Indian notabilities of the place. Weak of intellect, his simple and good-natured imbecility had gained him a notoriety among the white settlement, that a brighter wit could not have attained. While everybody knew him, and every sportive wretch must play upon him, some in a kindly spirit enough, but others roughly, his own people looked upon him as directly under the malevolent influence of the "bad God," and rather avoided, or let him alone, for they believed he was possessor of occult powers, and the alchemists of old were not credited with more knowledge of the "black art" than they believed this old savage had.

Providence it was said never clothed him in his right Cheyenne mind, but endowed him with material enough for imitative purposes, and when Washington officials selected and located the Government Agency, this poor unfortunate son-of-a-wild-tribe, watched the proceedings, and examined chains, and other surveying equipments, with unusual interest, and ever since for years, a faithful, trusty, stump-tailed-dog has been his daily companion, while a long variegated string made of old rope and rag, has strung far behind him, to be brought into service during his complicated rambles. From morning until night this old Indian went his way with a harmless air of one who felt a great government responsibility resting upon him.

He would stop long, leaning upon the corner of the fence, while he "sighted" full in the face his faithful follower, sitting at the other end, as if to trace some probable change in the line of the boards, or the dog, or read the friendly, or forgetful, demeanor of this trained, curtailed canine. Having this finished to his satisfaction he would hasten on, pausing near some scene he thought familiar, then leave the houses behind him, and enter the road that led out into the open country, to lay off lots of the withered stalks of last year's flowers, or snow-bleached roots, from which the golden-rod would bloom again. If a green window curtain was left a few hours in a vacant house you were sure to find "Old Surveyor's" trailing line next day, a long string of the same bright hue. When, "the maid was in the garden hanging out the clothes," and she spied this demented wanderer, her lamentations were those of a fluttering hen with her brood of chickens, in fear of a sailing hawk, for she knew that every vestige of her day's work was in danger of being torn into strings.

A new employe's family, not having heard of the haunts of this Cheyenne pirate, and believing the community honest, left a number of valuable garments on the line over night. Bright and early the next morning, with rare punctuality, "Old Surveyor" and his dog came around with familiar fragments of white underwear trailing through the dust, going to his daily work, perfectly oblivious of the consternation he had caused in the good housewife's home.

One day in August, after the blistering heat had been parching a little crop of corn in one corner of the Reservation, and even the Indian dog-fennel hung its head around the edges of the fence, "Pawnee Man," the owner of a two-by-four farm, was aroused by the sound of munching leaves, and the grunting of live objects in the center of his growing patch. Hurriedly getting his lariat he was not long in throwing the noose around the neck of two big hogs that he tied to a stake, where the animals kept up a squealing as loud as the tight hair-rope would allow a sound to escape, until his rage quieted, and he could better prepare to rid himself of a nuisance that had shattered his faith in realizing the success of following the white man's road.

Sedate, calm, and majestic, the immutable stars were looking down on the plain, when short, quick steps or galloping were distinctly heard in the distance, then a sound as of a brief struggle, and of animals squealing and choking for breath, accompanied with low guttural tones, approached our house. We were enjoying the evening breeze on the veranda, but instantly prepared ourselves for some unknown danger. As the noise came nearer the struggling and choking were greatly increased. We could not fail to recognize by the shadowy outlines the herculean contour of "Pawnee Man," half enveloped in a sheet, holding by a rope two good-sized hogs, strapped across his pony. They were pitching, and plunging, and darting in every direction. Between the two there appeared to be a desperate conflict, and it seemed doubtful which would triumph in the end, for often the animals would give the rope a sudden jerk that would almost pitch the other head foremost to the ground, while pony, rider, and all seemed in danger of demolition. Recovering at each turn from the shock, the Indian would bestow upon his burden a shower of Cheyenne expletives, catching at each gasp like a drowning man for breath, and vainly endeavoring to keep his charge in control. Thus, for several minutes, the semi-comic tragedy was kept up, to the infinite amusement of several spectators. When at length they came within fair speaking distance all questions, explanations, and answers were gone over by signs and guttural sounds, which, interpreted, meant that two good-sized government porkers, belonging to the Arrapahoe school, had broken through his fence, and trespassed beyond an industrious Indian's patience. Our merriment was somewhat deterred by observing the Indian's stolid, impregnable countenance, and his imperturbable gravity, and anger, for hogs in an Indian corn-field seemed too rare and momentous for frivolous discussion.

He was advised to return them in safety to the agent of the great Father in Washington. Whether he had lost faith in that benefactor could not be determined, but it was evident that he had not knelt down on the ground and kissed the kind government's hand in appreciation of favors received, or lighted his pipe of peace, for the skinned animals hanging on a cross-beam the next morning gave proof positive that all interference with his corn from the same source in the future was ended.

CHAPTER IX.

Women were the drudges. They were healthy, and displayed wonderful vigor of limb and back. They did not know they had backs; living constantly in the fresh pure air of their prairies, having plenty of physical exercise, they were naturally robust, stout, and healthy. The men employed their time in lying in the sun, still, lazy, inert, asleep, apparently until they were baked. No fiercest heat of the plain's sun seemed to affect them in the least. I had always felt a regret that I had been born a woman, and, not forgetting this disappointment, I soon thanked my stars that I was not an Indian squaw, who had a settled gloom resting upon her features, as she seemed to be weighed down by the misery of her degraded condition. To contrast my condition with hers made me thank heaven for my better fate. Her life was a round of wearisome labor, she dressed skins, dried meat, put up the lodges, packed the ponies, and, arriving at a new camp, pitched the tepees, brought wood and water, often carrying such heavy bunches of sticks on her back as to bend her almost double. Old squaws not less than sixty years of age would pass the house daily with enormous bundles of wood on their backs, held together by strips of rawhide, not weighing less than three hundred pounds, and it was not uncommon for them to carry six hundred pounds in the same manner.

Their beds were poles, ropes, and blankets, spread on a bedstead, purchased from the trader, if the parties were in a financial condition to buy such an article of furniture; if not, they slept on the ground. Cooking, eating, living, and sleeping, were all done in one small enclosure, and a few pots, kettles, and tin cups, constituted their kitchen conveniences. Of course the lack of privacy in an Indian tepee is a corresponding lack of modesty. The acts of domestic life among white people that occur in secret are performed by these savages without hesitation before grown people and children. The Indian seems to think it is all right, and he can bring home one wife after another and all repose together if the space is large enough; if not the older women are turned out for the younger and better-looking. Infidelity in a husband does not seem to awaken any jealousy in the breast of the cast-off-wives. There never seems to be any trouble or difficulty on this account. It is the custom for the red-man to have as many wives as his inclination prompts, or his wealth in ponies allows. To an Indian the word pony or gun involves all the happiness attached by us to houses, lands, furniture, books, etc., therefore the price is not depreciatory of the "article" offered for sale. The women possess no will of their own, and would not be allowed to exercise it if they did. They are sold at the age of twelve or fourteen years to the man who will give the most for them, and they at once become his slave. The husband may abuse and beat his wife, but if she is fortunate enough to be good-looking and industrious, she can leave him for any other man that will take her and pay for her.

A brave that takes a fancy to another man's wife, makes advances and is accepted. The husband may wake up some morning to find her gone. He searches for her through the camp, finds her in another man's lodge, who tells him she is his wife. The heart-broken husband has recourse to the chiefs and head men, who examine into the case, assess the damages according, usually, to the husband's finances. Very often a man may take a fancy to a girl, and without courtship buy her from her father, but, if she resents all efforts to consummate the marriage for three days and nights, she can return to her home, while the father is obliged to pay back to the purchaser the price he received for her.

An Indian has not the first idea of moral obligation. They are all alike in their entire abandonment to the gratification of their passions. The women are expected to be chaste for no other reason but to keep themselves entirely for their husband. Although men may be in "puris naturalibus" in the presence of a number of squaws they will not appear shocked. They may be callous as to exposing their person, but they themselves be pure. The river bank would often be lined with men, women, and children, the fact that they did not consider it necessary to use any kind of bathing-dress was a trifle embarrassing at first to the modest foreigner who had occasion to walk by, or cross over the river, but he soon became accustomed to the omission. Every day the village would turn out *en masse*, strip, and sit sociably discussing social matters in the water, where the temperature probably subjected the shafts of criticism to reach their neighbors, as does this phase of local gossip crop out in our own enlightened people as they delight to linger across the yard fence, by the kitchen window, or just at the alley where reputations are blackened, and lives go out in eternal night. If this innocent heathen ignorance is simpler and easier, why should it be condemned by our prudish wisdom? As we would drive along the road scores of merry, laughing lads from three to eight years of age, their little reddish-brown bodies with a wonderful glossiness of the skin shining in the sun, would follow the carriage As long as they could run to keep up with the horses they would enjoy the race as our own white children would, and often prove their enduring powers of strength. The exaggerated absence, and total disregard of clothing on the bodies of these juvenile bucks were startling. Every girl after the age of twelve takes a rope the size of the little finger and wraps it closely around the body, beginning at the waist, and coming down to the thighs, and with this protection the Cheyenne maiden is secure. To unravel that rope requires both patience and skill. Again, when the husband is absent from home, the wife, before retiring, ties a lariat about her waist and wraps it tightly around her legs, to the ankle; with this protection she may sleep alone in a lodge unmolested. The Cheyenne and Arrapahoe tribes differ greatly in the chastity of their women. Among the Arrapahoes infidelity is not especially noticed by the husband, while the Cheyenne upon a discovery would result in serious consequences. The females of the Cheyennes are said to be almost models of chastity, while those of the Arrapahoes exactly the reverse.

"Would you like to see a Cheyenne maiden courted?" said a well-informed party on such matters, as a visit to some of the neighboring gentry and socially influential encampments were suggested. A novel proposition, I thought, but I eagerly answered that "love-making, I should think, must be interesting under any and all circumstances, in any country and in any clime; but it would be exaggeratingly exciting to watch a warrior sacredly win, if possible, the love of his heart, whether he had ponies or other property to pay for her or not."

"Well," said my informant, "this wooing is enacted in plain sight, before the whole tribe, without the semblance of secresy." Then I felt a disappointment, not understanding the full meaning of the import; for I could but think the imaginary charm of thraldom that engulfs two souls with but a single thought would lose all sentiment and become rudely practical if "Drink to me only with thine eyes" was the privilege of as many to do so as wanted to look.

One night, when the moon was shining in her full effulgence, flooding both prairie and river with her silvery light, we heard a whisper in the air that a story of "Love's Old Sweet Song" was nightly sung 'neath the blue of heaven, out on the broad stretch of the soft buffalo grass, as sweetly by the young savage as our own beaux and belles were wont to plight their troth, and make themselves willing and submissive prisoners at the shrine; for it was the same moon, serenely mellow, and the same summer night, when a fond caress and a loving vow is prefaced and embellished with ardent glances by every nationality, the world over. The flaming stars glowed with more fiery pulsation above; wild, barbaric melodies were sounding below; shadow, sense, and scene, word and movement, threaded and thrilled through and around with passionate vehemence.

We were told that the grotesque-looking figures off to themselves, sitting on the ground 'midst snakes, toads, and jack-rabbits, with a sheet thrown over their heads, completely enveloping them, were an already engaged couple, making love to their hearts' content, where the young brave had long since thrown fame, name, feathers, and fortune at her feet. An odor from the hop-clover swept over them as the young warrior poured forth his whole heart and soul and life into a love stronger than death or the grave; but we thought his seething bosom, under the simmering, summer-resort shelter, must have craved an ice-cream soda or a dream of polar ice to fan his blistering brow. Such parties were never disturbed; and although they might be watched with true Indian curiosity, etiquette required disinterested members of the tribe to keep away, and act as if nothing was going on.

The young Indian brave denounces sentiment as unmanly and love a weakness, and the lover, although priding himself on the violence of his passions, is at first shy. We saw a buck standing near a lodge, wrapped in his mantle, with that part of the face that could be seen painted in the highest style of Indian art; while another, similarly gotten up, was lying, to all intents and purposes, apparently out of sight, near the door, trying to conceal himself from the observation of others while he watched for the appearance of his beloved. Although probably every member of the tribe knew of the presence of both, it is one of the strongest fictions of Indian life that the lover is supposed to be entirely unseen by any but his inamorata, although in full view of the whole world.

The one might have been standing there for hours without a word; the other, concealed in the same way, showing only by looks and actions the feelings that consumed him, as their wild frenzy could be hidden no longer; they were evidently determined to bring the struggle to an end then and there. They were thinking of the dark, passionate siren of their fiery, fierce, vindictive race, that stood between the heaven of their dreams, luring them on to destruction. Thus, between conflicting emotions, a young princess of the night, a moon-goddess with black eyes burning like two flames; with the grace and lightness of a butterfly on the wing; with her long, glossy braids of hair, deep crimson spot on either cheek, and the same bright hue down the part of her shapely head; her single garment, worn with no unnecessary waste of material, either in length or amplitude, and so constructed as not to interfere materially with the free action of her limbs; with strings and rows of beads around her neck, she appeared radiant and bewildering.

A rush was made; the standing lover seized her, but she cried out, and he immediately quit her. But she yielded passively as the other extended his arms and quickly imprisoned her unresisting form, bearing her off, trembling and shrinking, a short distance from the lodge, while probably a deep, intense, fervent joy was thrilling through her heart and being for this favored one. They stood facing each other, but remained standing while one robe was sufficient to cover them both, for he was for the first time telling her of his hopes, energies, and ambitions, that would be devoted to but one purpose now—that of rewarding her for her priceless love.

There were many desperate flirts among the beauties of the tribe, and we were told that these rich, bronzed prairie-flowers would sometimes keep a dozen lovers lying about the tepee-door: not under the lilies and roses, but under the little bright and shining stars that never tell; for months flirting with each in turn, for they could play fast and loose, false and true, with the best of them, for this is easily acquired by the ingenious of all nations, and, once acquired, is never forgotten or neglected. When the young people come to an understanding, if they are allowed to do so before they are sold to some favorite suitor of their relations or friends, the price is discussed in all its bearings. All the ponies, robes, and other belongings of the lover are taken to the lodge of the sweetheart. When morning comes, if the ponies and other things are where they were left, the suit has been rejected by the parents. If the ponies have been sent to the herd and the other things taken into the tepee, the lover's offer is accepted.

It is considered as effeminate in a man to show affection for his wife or attention to any other woman; but "Powder Face," head war-chief of the Arrapahoes, and several lengths ahead of his people, was an exception. He was a finely-proportioned, handsome man, with a pleasant expression of countenance and dignity of movement. Covered with scars, and celebrated long ago for the many scalps he had taken, he had the right to adopt a dozen names; yet he was known by all the plains tribes, and to the whites, by the title which was given him from having his face badly burned by an explosion of powder when he was a young man. He had been for years a tried and trusted friend of the Government.

His character was all meekness, tempered by a becoming firmness. He indulged in no display of his delegated authority, and this man, a noble specimen of the species, was a truly good, live Indian. After greeting you with a few words of English, as he understood the language some, he would hold up one finger, his face beaming with pleasure and satisfaction, saying: "Me one wife—one wife. Walk." She went with him everywhere. He would sit for hours combing her hair, petting and fondling her, this great-hearted man. He had taken several trips East, visiting the large cities, his wife always accompanying him, where they enjoyed the hurly-burly scenes of Gotham. He loved to tell by signs and broken English how they went out in a big boat on the water from New York, and, between glances of affection and bursts of merriment, he would describe the terrors of "Walk's" sickness on the ocean. This display of regard for a companion would disgrace a less determined or well-known warrior.

CHAPTER X.

Nothing in animated nature indulges in less thought or unnecessary activity than the Indian; no poetic dream flits through his brain; no golden reveries, but his orgy and debauch, amuse his repose. To him activity is one of the evils of life especially to be shunned. But while the men are conceded as being indolent, one invariably finds the female portion of the family engaged at some kind of work. The greater portion of the squaw's time is occupied in making moccasins, which are made of skins and beads, preparing the skin being the most difficult part of the task.

I was not a philanthropist, yet I became much attached to my new home. It had the essential ingredient of domestic enjoyment. I seemed to have faded into a dream of things that were. I entered into the spirit of my new life with the greatest relish possible, determined to anticipate nothing but a pleasant, prosperous existence. The people, through a spirit of curiosity and friendship, were my daily visitors. They showed the greatest delight and pleasure in watching me with my brush or needle, and gave me the name of "Medicine Squaw," denoting something wonderful, or a mysterious gift of the "Great Spirit."

The women excelled in fine bead-work, and their baby cribs, moccasins, fancy leggings, and other work were exquisitely wrought, and displayed a wonderful taste in color, and extraordinary patience. Each bead is strung on sinew, and the frame for carrying their small children on their backs are of solid beads, while the harmonious blending of colors is a delight to the eye.

The extreme patience of their wild character lends itself with special adaptability to the care required in such manipulation. In the concocting of their many dyes they use vegetable substances, and understand the workings of many herbs. Few, even of the poorest of the lower grades, but have their beaded moccasins. It is astonishing to see the beauty and value which has often added to unsightly objects. The ease or accuracy with which intricate designs are conceived or followed from some minute line of pattern was astonishing. Civilized needlework can show nothing more delicate or more refined than the specimens of work to be seen everywhere from the hands of the Cheyenne women. This ingenuity is shown to good advantage in the manufacture of an artistic article of foot and leg gear made to order by "Wolf-Robe's" squaw. My bare foot was placed on a piece of soft-tanned hide, while with a blue chalk the shape was drawn by the woman with much accuracy, the emphasis of perfection being marked by the exquisite bead-coloring which is specially accented in this piece of work.

My civilized friends of the East were indulging in the many fads of the day, while I was interested in the barbaric gems of my surrounding neighbors as evidence of their soon-to-be-vanished greatness. My pin-money all went in this direction, and they asked, or demanded, fabulous prices from me at times.

I was in constant communication with officials in charge of the different tribes of the United States, writing hundreds of letters to Indian agents, and, while I was persistently annoying, I was treated by them with the greatest courtesy and consideration. Hence the foundation had been laid to what then had become not only an historically valuable Indian collection, but one of endearing memories, for I had secured from nearly every tribe in the United States and Alaska something, from a score of mammoth barnacles taken from a whale's back by the "Neah Bay" Indians, to a buckskin coat made by Princess Mary, and worn by her brother, "Captain Jack of Modoc Lava-bed fame," and "the entire war-horse-trappings of Yellow Bear, Second Chief of the Nez-Perces, consisting of a buck-saddle, made of elk horn, collar, crupper, bridle, gun-case and leggings, all of buckskin, elaborately trimmed with beadwork, and sleigh-bell pendants that he wore during the tribe's memorable fight in the north, with Generals Miles and Gibbons."

In each recurring trip to Washington, I would find myself mapping out the "Smithsonian" as the center of many places of interest to be visited, believing it a conscientious duty to inform myself whether the sacred old relics under this roof of the world could yield any new or startling information since I had paid my last respects. I would spend hours securing names of tribes and addresses of Government traders while absorbing antique aroma of quaint superstitious specimens, from the red-man's guarantee of good-luck to his safeguard from the dark wings of an evil genius.

Even after passing the international boundary line into Old Mexico, and crossing over the greatest engineering feat human skill and ingenuity ever conquered, my thoughts at once turned to the unique and exquisite absurdities of Indian venders. My friends facetiously argued that "coffee plantations, hibiscus hedges, cocoanut palms, and the brilliant high-hanging orchards, was not exactly appropriate for an aboriginal collection, and while the effect might be satisfactory, it would be a little inconvenient for them to box the groves of beautiful white-flowering gardenias that were scenting the air for miles, so they besought me to content myself with a bottle of perfume as a souvenir, together with a pathetic story that went with it, of a young lady who received a bouquet of the white blooms (that look like a magnolia blossom) from her sweetheart. After putting them in her room at night, the fragrance was so intense, she went to sleep. The next morning she was dead, just as though she had been asphyxiated. I found in the tropical country around Vera Cruz, intensely interesting native Indian work. The fiber of their beautiful maguey plant, which we call the century plant, is easily decorticated, and when woven the product is strong, and all kinds of wonderful things are made from the leaves.

"The Apache Olla's," that show such ingenuity in their black figures of men, women, and animals woven in them, have to be made in the early spring-time when the sap is in the twigs and cactus leaves of which they are made, for in the summer the material is brittle and makes rough work.

The "California Saint Cloud River Indians," make a cincture that is beautifully unique. It is made of pine nuts, which are seed of a certain species of pine (sometimes called pinons). They kindle fires against the trees, thus causing the nuts to fall out of the cones. At the same time a sweet gum exudes from the bark, serving the purpose of sugar. They bury these seeds in rich dirt, a certain length of time, and then rub them into a glistening polish. They are punctured, and strung on buckskin strings, in strands long and thick enough to make a royal kirtle. The same Indians also weave a most ingenious skirt out of light and dark brown fiber; while the Mohavas, of Arizona, make a kirtle of soft tanned bark, and the "Skokomish of Washington" use cedar.

I had a papoose taken from a solid beaded cradle because it had been made and used by the daughter of the Sioux chief, "Young-man-afraid-of-his-horses," and an elaborately beaded dress was secured in the same way, its interest centering in the fact that the girl was a daughter of "Rain-in-the-face."

A white-beaded ground jacket, with red, white, and blue beads, woven into United States flags, belonged to "Red Cloud's son," who wore it until he outgrew it.

A gorgeously beaded squaw's saddle and blanket, made by "Chargrie Shields," considered at the time to be the handsomest Indian squaw in the Sioux tribe, was sold by her after she decided to give a feast to her brother on his return from Carlisle School, and when she found her finances were not sufficient to carry out the function on as large a scale as she wished.

The Moqui-woven mosaic basket patterns vie with Alaska work, while their ceremonial dress is a work of art.

The Comanches, Apaches, and a few Kiowas are addicted to the use of a fruit, which they procure from Mexico, and which is said by them to be the fruit of a cactus that grows along the Pecos, Rio-Grande, and Purgatorio rivers, and on the plains of Mexico, and New Mexico. Its common name generally used is "Mescal" bean. It is a quarter of an inch thick, and an inch and a half in diameter. When dry it is hard, and about the color of tobacco, and not unlike tobacco in taste. The center of the upper side is covered with a coat of gray fuzz. Its effect on the Indian is believed by medical men to be somewhat like that of cocaine.

It not only makes physical wrecks of them in a short time, but it destroys their mental faculties as well. While under its influence they are in dreamland, and see the most beautiful visions. One of the strange hallucinations which it produces is the belief that everything seen in their visions is real. A unique, and fancy-beaded round receptacle is made for this "mental drug," and is attached to a long string of beads, or sea-beans, which dangles from the neck of the fierce-looking Comanche.

I secured one of these odd-looking pouches, that had been handed down from the descendants of "Iron Shirt,"a chief who had lived in his nomadic way near the Purgatorio, in that hot country of cactus blossoms, and who, tradition says, was named because of a rusty old shirt of chain-mail which he wore. Running right through the town of Trinidad, a little river familiarly and indiscriminately flows under three names, Las Animas, the Purgatorio and the Picket Wire. Santa Fé, New Mexico, claims to be, and is, about the same age as St. Augustine, Florida. Both towns are considerably over three hundred years old.

Back in the middle of the sixteenth century the Spaniards at Santa Fé made up a military detachment to go overland to St. Augustine. The Dons didn't know anything of the country which lay between. All they were posted on was the distance and the general direction. Rather late in the fall some seven hundred of them—steel-clad soldiers, camp-followers, baggage-train and women, pushed in through the Raton Pass over the trail now followed by the Santa Fé Railroad, and at the beginning of the winter made a camp at what is now the site of Trinidad, which sits fairly in the mouth of the Raton Canyon, looking out on the plains where, to the east of them, over which their course must trend, lay an utter waste of country, apparently without limit. All that winter the Spaniards camped in the mouth of the Raton Canyon. With the first coming of early grass, the adventurers burnished their armor, fitted up their horses, and got ready to move. The camp-followers, the women and the extra baggage they sent back to Santa Fé. When last seen the party bound for St. Augustine, numbering several hundreds, were marching down the valley of the little river by which they had camped. That was the last ever heard of them, not a feather ever floated back to tell the story of their fate. With the last flap of the last banner, and the latest sun-glint on the rearmost steel, they disappeared from the earth.

Fifty years ago "Iron Shirt" appeared in his coat of mail, but neither he nor any of the other Comanches knew anything of the origin of the garment, nor where it came from. It had been in the tribe further back than the short Comanche memory could reach. Many have supposed that it was a relic of this Spanish expedition of three centuries ago, which had apparently marched off the earth that far-away spring day in the mouth of the Raton Canyon.

The disappearance of these Spanish soldiers seemed so witch-like that it made a profound impression on the superstitious people they had left behind. They named the little river Rio de Las Animas, meaning the River of the Lost Souls, and it is supposed to hold the story of the expedition's dark fate, and repeat it to itself in the language which the Mexicans do not pretend to understand.

When the French fur-traders came trapping in those waters from St. Louis in a French effort at translation they made out that the "River of the Lost Souls" must mean the Purgatory River, and so gave the river its translated name of Purgatorio. Later, when the American bull-whacker marched through on his way to Santa Fé, he accepted the French name, but called it Picket Wire. To this day the river wears all three titles, as the reader would soon learn by turning to the Trinidad newspapers, when he would find cattle brands advertised as having their ranges variously on the Las Animas, the Purgatorio, and the Picket Wire. Every man picks out his name for himself, but they all mean the same. The Mexicans, however, loyally stick to the name "Rio de Las Animas," and Mexican mothers tell their children of the soldiers who, hundreds of years ago, marched from there and were never heard of again.

CHAPTER XI.

THE "Cheyennes" were excessively fond of finery, delighting in ribbons and gew-gaws, in ornamentations of gold and precious stones they "swapped" for at the "Traders'." The women of the wealthier class possessed an oriental fondness for flowing robes, and untold treasure was often expended to procure an "Elk-tooth" garment, which was their most valuable single article of female dress. It is an imperial covering made of strauding (a cloth of fine texture resembling the best quality of felt manufactured only by one firm in the United States). It is sold by the traders to the Indians for blankets. The great value of the dress consists in the thick incrustations of elk-teeth. The teeth are the finest ivory. They are graduated in size, and each mouth contains but two of these teeth. I was as intent on securing one of these mantles as if I had belonged to the Cheyenne four hundred. I made my wish known to the government interpreter, "George Bent," son of Colonel Bent, a noted and celebrated plainsman, who crossed the desert before Fremont, and raised the flag at Fort Bent, Colorado, when Westport was a struggling frontier town, drowsy in the sunshine, and Kansas City unthought of. I was soon in the possession of one—the gift of this big-hearted man. It has a covering of one thousand four hundred and fifty teeth, that represented seven hundred and twenty-five slaughtered elks. Each tooth will sell readily, when they can be found, at a dollar each, or such an article of wearing apparel would buy a whole herd of ponies. It was easily understood that only "royalty" itself could afford such splendor. In lavish expenditure of animal life, to gratify human caprice, this robe would contest supremacy with the feasts of peacock brains in which epicurean emperors of Rome were wont to indulge, and rival Montezuma's mantle of humming-birds. The garment was so old it was necessary to take the teeth off to have it mended. It would never do to trust so dear and valuable an article, a thing of beauty, to the Indians in the camps to be stolen, so I had two old squaws come to the house, and while I cut each tooth off, they made sinew thread, and sewed them on.

I veritably became a curio-fiend, and no tribe in the remotest parts of space escaped me; for I seemed to have had such varied experiences, and understood so well how to fit myself for surrounding conditions, that I penetrated every corner with a restless energy, and practical turn, by traveling farther, going oftener, probing deeper, seeing more, spending more, and getting more, than any other seeker in the same direction; for, besides having the true American instinct of daring capability in my pursuit, my patronage was a large factor, and it constantly increased as I exhausted the old and familiar routes, and sighed for other worlds to conquer, or hear foreign eagles scream. I rejoiced on the whole that only two relics of interest were ever secured that was not of my own personal zeal and labor: one of these being a solid silver medal, beautifully chased, bearing the inscription, "George Washington, President, 1793." It was presented by Washington, while President of the United States, to White Swan, a Wea chief. The genuineness cannot be doubted, as it was found, with the proclamation with which it was presented, in the effects of Elizabeth Charley, a granddaughter of White Swan; the original proclamation printed on sheep-skin being still extant. The other is a solid silver peace-pipe, with richly engraved bowl, presented by Major-General (afterwards President Harrison) to Blackhoof, one of a Shawnee delegation to Washington. The inscription reads—"Presented by Maj.-General Harrison in behalf of the United States to the Shawneweese tribe of Indians, 1814."

Great was the exertion, worry, and persistency, in which I secured so many interesting mementos; but my searches were enjoyable trips, which I remember with feelings of novelty and pleasure, such as linger in my memory regarding few other expeditions. Every one of the thousands of both tribes, so great had been their interest in my collection, knew what I wanted the moment they saw me, and my name was a passport to the civilities and hospitalities of these savages, where I always experienced their kindness. Although dimmed now, these are pleasant reminiscences of hazy indistinctness, which leaves me almost in doubt whether they are actual things which have happened to me, or only dreams.

Yet I cherish a vivid remembrance of Generals Sheridan, Miles, and Hatch, Buffalo Bill, and a score of other distinguished callers who pretended to be extravagantly interested and entertained at my enthusiastic weakness in pointing out the merit of some rare Cheyenne treasure of intrinsic Indian value that they were already familiar with, and had long before forgotten more about than I had ever known.

I heard a jingling, rattling, and a running of pattering feet one day around the gallery, and, as I was always alert for some new trophy or novelty, I found a number of tidy-looking Cheyenne women of the "smartest" and most "exclusive" of their set, with their children, standing looking in at the window. One of the party was a little nabob girl of perhaps three years of age, royally dressed with "rings on her fingers, and bells on her toes." The soft-toned, tinkling sounds came from "jinglers" she wore hung on a sinew strap around her neck, which announced every move she made. At first I negotiated with the mother for her just as she stood before me, for she was an ideal picture. I was fully satisfied, however, when I succeeded in inducing, by a most liberal offer, to have her part with the heirloom belt she wore. It is unique in its way, being of leather, with every conceivable bead-trinket dangling from it. An old-rusty-wheel of a clock and the key had been found, and added, and although brightened up, it bore unmistakable evidence of having been handed down from a generation past.

I found a "medicine, or sacred necklace," of turtle-bones in camp, representing a hundred-and-fifty turtles. They boil these hard-backed reptiles, keep the shell for an ornament, bore holes through the leg-bones, string and use them, to keep away the Evil Spirit.

Never, until after the ghost-craze, was it possible to get them to part with their "medicine rattles," or "hokey-pokey-spirit-chasers." I would, self-invited, practically without let or hindrance, double up and dart into their little tepee openings to look around and, while I created a sensation by so doing, I soon learned my unceremonious visits were like a child's play of hide-and-seek. When I neared the medicine-bag, or "par-flêche" that was a trunk, or round receptacle, made of stiff raw-hide, probably hanging bedecked (with an elaboration of painting on its outside), in some remote corner, there would be ominous looks, and guttural warning sounds that would turn me in another direction, for I knew I was trespassing on what they considered sacred, and near the belongings of the Great Spirit, and to touch or look into one of these things would be a sacrilege worthy of immediate death; and the secret of the unknown ingredients, and special and particular "good medicine," was known to no one except the initiated few, while efficacy depended on keeping inviolate its secret.

Volumes could be filled in telling of my many adventures, as it were, with some of these antediluvian savages, for I was never daunted. They liked me and, with all my persistency, they were flattered that I took such an interest in their wares.

One day I got my hand into a long buffalo-hide sack, and was just bringing out, catch-as-catch-can, hoo-doo-charms galore for appeasing the "bad-God" when two or three old mourning howlers with scowling visage grabbed me, and I began to think I had been rude and really displeased them, but I thoroughly satisfied them before I left, and walked off with many emblems of their religious superstitions besides. The "medicine rattle" with a human scalp attached, and tobacco-pouch that belonged to "Black-Kettle" who was killed by General Custer on the Washita, in 1869, are among the hundreds of things collected. The bead ornamentation was done by "Mon-e-se-tah" (Young-grass-that-shoots-in-the-spring), a niece of the old chief.

The hand-painted tepee that "Yellow-Nose," the noted desperate fighter, has so artistically portrayed for me, is of the same battle, the officer being Custer, and the principal Indian brave "Black-Kettle."

"Yellow-Nose" was captured from a fighting band of Utes when a boy by the Cheyennes and Arrapahoes. He grew up with the tribe, participating in all their battles, and was of the heathen braves that took part in the "Big-Horn-massacre," claiming as a distinction that he killed one of the "big white chiefs" during that engagement. However this may be, he has a reputation with the tribe of having an unusual amount of grim-browed resolution, and having, in his day, poured out as much death to the pale-face, at short-range, as any one of their number. Such achievements were deemed by him brilliant passages of his life, but now all he has left is to combine his artistic gift with his war reminiscences, for he is an artist of no mean import.

In several drawings he has made for me of different encounters that he had there was scarcely a white man escaped complete annihilation. A profuse amount of unruffled feathers were always on top, standing out to the breeze, or, as the Indian was always confident of victory, and manifesting not the slightest agitation or alarm at his own safety, he is always in the act of

" Yellow Nose" sitting in front of his studio.

popping over a white chief, while great streams of red flow from numerous places of his victim at once.

He would have savages in swarms on fleet and shaggy bronchos continually emerging from some bypaths, with gleaming lances, and supposed war-cries, assailing the flank of the "blue-coats'" line. I had great curiosity, and was anxious to watch this talented "Yellow-Nose" at his work, and learn something of his artistic methods, but to one who comes upon the "wild-studio" unawares, as I did, it will be a revelation. I stopped in front of the lodge that joined three or four others (they almost invariably place their tepees so close together that nothing can be said or done in one that is not known to all the occupants of the others), the whole surrounded by brush, stacked in place to break the strong prairie winds. The traditional rags and skins were laying around, but inside the brush inclosure it was swept clean, and the place had a tidy appearance. There were two dog-kennel-wick-e-ups, off to one side, full of fat puppies of delicious broiling size. There seemed to be some commotion, for I heard bucks and squaws relieving themselves of their heathenish jabber, while children were crying and dogs barking.

I was met at the entrance by a young Indian of perhaps twenty-eight or thirty, who had been a Carlisle pupil, but fallen into the hands of the Philistines, he was then so intoxicated as to be more dangerous in his semi-civilized condition than his untutored savage brother, and to prove his contempt for his educational advantages, he had more ribbon on his blanket, and longer otter tales to his hair, than any of his companions in camp. I knew the police had been scouring the country to find, and put him in the guard-house, and that he was a terror when in his cups.

He had heard the noise of wheels, and, ever alert, stepped out of the main lodge holding, a murderous-looking six-shooter in each hand. As there was no one but Silas, the colored driver, in the carriage this "hop-tea-drinker by occupation, educated-young-man by profession, and Indian by nature," grasped the situation. Recognizing me, and realizing, in his drunken stupor, and the camp bedlam, that I had no evil designs on his life, his fears reluctantly quieted, and I was allowed to live, although from the count of heart-throbs after the first shock of seeing this crazy, wild-eyed savage, made me doubt as to the length of respite. At the first glance I was inspired by superhuman energy which at that moment glowed in my bosom, to turn, start, and run—a lightning decision which was warranted by the exigencies of the occasion. I knew I never could escape being struck by one of those bullets. If I was not killed outright I would be wounded, it was simply one of the "slight pleasantries" of curiosity and contamination, that would require time to recuperate my physical force.

This was my introduction to the savage studio. After things were quieted I found "Yellow-Nose," the artist. He was a man of smaller stature than either the Cheyennes or Arrapahoes, the latter almost invariably being tall, with fine physique and features. His hair was unkempt, and he wore it bushy around his head and ears, while the ends that hung low on each shoulder were brought to the front and tied with old string. His once white sheet was a far off-color tint. He was working on my tepee canvas. He had it drawn over an improvised table of boards. At his side were a number of sticks, six or seven inches in length, whittled to a sharp point, that he used for brushes. A bottle of indelible black ink, red ink, and colored pencils, that had been procured at the trader's, all kinds of dyes, and colored powders, made from Indian herbs, comprised his materials. He would take a pencil, and without any apparent thought or exertion, draw his subject, dipping one of his sharp pointed sticks in the black ink, and rubbing it thoroughly inside of his pencil lines, there would develop the most impressive-looking black-winged crow, the Messiah's symbolical bird.

His "blue-coats," that he portrayed in battle, were marvels of art, and the way he distinguished their rank required but the turn of the wrist. His equine legs might have been a little stiff, or stringhalted, as it were, and perhaps they were not as true to nature as Remington would have made them, but they answered the purpose of realistically demonstrating a target to be shot at; and as he was himself always the prominent figure in the foreground, dealing out death, he made red ink and herb vermilion blood flow from their mouths and side in great profusion.

The lodge he was painting was a miniature affair of five feet made by Cheyenne "Wolf-Chief's squaw" on one of my visits to Cantonment, sixty-five miles from Fort Reno, where, when it was finished, I spent half a day trying to learn the intricate workings of back-wind-poles, pegs, loops, and dimensions of construction, in putting it up, my stupidity displayed giving much amusement to the Indians as well as to my courteous friends. It is profusely decorated with beaded ornamentations, and scalp-locks, while the painting represents "Black-Kettle's war-party," with a voluminous portrayal of the warlike performances of that chieftain and his warriors, with immense rows of feathers trailing over their heads and down their backs.

Highly-illuminated desperate encounters fairly bristle with soldiers impaled on the end of savage spears, demonstrating the fact that, although the Indian was vanquished at this memorable conflict, he still cherishes a fond remembrance of the fate of Major Elliott, who was commanding one of the attacking columns. This brave officer suddenly found his little party entirely surrounded by an overwhelming horde of Cheyennes and Arrapahoes, who attacked him on all sides, and neither he, nor any one of the nineteen men who accompanied him, was ever again seen alive by any white man.

I had a fine specimen of a panther's-skin quiver that had been made to show to good advantage the savage claws of the beast. It had belonged to "Little Raven" who, in years past, had been a great war-chief of the Arrapahoes, and all-powerful with his people. It had been a receptacle used by him when with "Satanta" and war-party of Kiowas he went to the assistance of the Cheyennes at the battle of the "Washita." I had it hanging on the veranda in the sun one day when one of the head Cheyenne men asked permission to examine it. It was filled with dozens of steel-barbed arrows, intended for war, intermingled with the blunt three-cornered hieroglyphically painted practice and medicine points.

After pulling out several, and commenting upon them all, each one having a particular history and value, his exclamations and Indian articulations of surprise and great awe were inspiring as he reverently laid two of the number aside, leaving no doubt in my mind of his sincerity in believing they had pierced the heart of an enemy. They were short, sharp iron barbs like a lancet, and were very lightly attached to the wood, as it was intended that the head should remain in the wound, and kill eventually, if not immediately. There was a tiny groove that ran in a zig-zag line down the entire length of the shaft, to allow the blood to flow from the wound, while the stain of a coagulated reddish-black substance was very perceptible. Wild-turkey feathers smoothly wound with sinew was used for ornament and to direct the flight. To me many of them were apparently alike, but by certain marks, either a groove along the shaft or the arrangement of the feathers, at a mere glance this man told from what part of the country each weapon came from. He begged me to exchange the two for a dozen of his own make, assuring me if he could possess so sacred a treasure the "Bad God" could have no power over him, and he would be able to radiate streams of beneficent influence over his tribe.

The interpreter explained that the medicine chief most renowned for his power over the "Bad God" was the Cheyenne "Medicine Arrow" He had gained this reputation for his marvelous escape from apparently certain death, and he ascribed this wonderful immunity to his discovery of the secret of making an arrow so potent in its charms against the "evil one" that no warrior who carried one could ever be hurt in any way. The fame of his arrows extended to all the plains Indians. These two special ones, it seems, had been used by the Pawnees, an exceedingly warlike race, and at one time one of the most powerful tribes in the territory of the United States, who vied with all the wild tribes in courting the danger of the war-path, and winning the scalps of their enemies. This explained the savage desire to possess my two life-preserving arrows. Not satisfied at my acceding to his heart's desire, he then wanted to try the strength of the bow, that was probably a hundred years old, and the speed of all the death-dealing weapons. He was certainly an expert, and gave a beautiful exhibition of arrow-throwing, for he would take a bunch of arrows in his left hand, and discharge them so rapidly that the last would be on its flight before the first had touched the ground, and with such destructive force that I had all human and animal life put out of the way, for fear everything on the place would be found lying around mortally wounded.

An interesting memento was a "war-deer-claw rattle," a foot long, decorated with a fringe of scalps. The captain of the Cheyenne dog-soldiers, for a decade of years, had carried it, holding it high in the air at all their battles, vigorously shaking it, and calling on the Great Spirit for protection as he charged at the head of his column. He believed that under its influence they would conquer the whites and avenge their wrongs. A brilliantly-beaded lizard, reproduced with wonderful effect and in a realistic manner, with a tiny, fluffy white feather of a sacred bird standing straight up from his serpent-shaped head, was found tied in the scalp-lock, and worn by "Dull Knife" during the "Chivington massacre of Cheyennes, that occurred at Sand Creek, near Fort Reno, in 1864."

From a sailor on the Pacific coast, I secured a relic of fascinating interest, made by an Esquimaux of "Kotzebue Sound," near the land of the Midnight Sun, where sleep holds sway during the summer months, and winter brings unbroken night. It is a queer, odd-looking pipe, made of walrus tusk. It consists of three pieces, bowl, stem, and mouth-piece. As tobacco is extremely scarce, and therefore valuable, near the Arctic circle, the bowl is quite small, in fact it will hold only half the quantity used in making a cigarette. The stem is rather large, and is ornamented with silhouettes, representing the occupations of the Esquimaux, and figures taken from their mythology. The figures are colored with charcoal, mixed with walrus-oil, which makes a durable pigment.

The men make war-bonnets, shields, spears, and scalp-shirts. The war-bonnet is the head-dress of white-winged eagle feathers, extending down the back, and with which Indian pictures have made us so familiar. The shield is circular, made to wear in battle, and consists of buffalo-hide made of two thicknesses, an inch apart, the interval closely packed with hair adorned with feathers. It is dried so hard, and made so thick, that it is said, a bullet will not penetrate it. The spear is a round pole from four to six feet long, with an ugly-looking steel point attached, and carried in a case of feathered buckskin.

I was interested to know how the great quantity of feathers from the American bird of freedom were obtained by these people. The Indians that dwell along the walls of the Colorado River have a superstition regarding the vast gorges and canyons through which the river winds its way. To them this extraordinary work of nature was entirely too marvelous to admit of a natural explanation, and so, in accordance with a line of reasoning which is generally observed all the world over by savage minds, they immediately set to work to account for the canyons on supernatural grounds.

It was disobedience to the gods to enter this region. Years ago there was a great and wise chief who mourned the death of his wife, and would not be comforted until one of the Indian gods came to him and told him she was in a happier land, and offered to take him there if, upon his return, he would cease to mourn. The great chief promised. Then he made a trail through the mountains that intervene between that beautiful land, the balmy, flowery, sweet-smelling country of California, and the Arizona desert home of poor Lo.

This trail of course was the canyon gorge of the Colorado. Through it he led them, and when he returned the deity exacted from the chief a promise that he would tell no one of the joys of that land, lest, through discontent with the circumstances of this world, they should desire to go to the illimitable hunting-grounds where ammunition never gave out, nor guns missed fire. Then he rolled a river into the gorge, a mad, raging stream that should engulf any who might attempt to enter thereby; but in this latter day when an Indian wants to capture an eagle he does so regardless of his mortal welfare, hand-me-down legends, or folk-lore stories. He first seeks some putrid carcass, and stripping himself of every vestige of clothing, smears himself with the decayed flesh, then climbing the heights near the eagle's eyrie, he stretches himself out on the rocks near the verge of a tremendous abyss often 3,000 feet high, above a fierce gurgling torrent with his trusty knife in hand, immovably waiting the slow approach of the eagle, drawn by the scent from his body. As the bird at last swoops down at him he plunges the blade in its breast and thus secures his prey at the risk of dropping over the edge of the precipice to meet a miserable death by being dashed down through interminable depths. Those found on the great plains are caught in the same manner, except that a hole is dug in the ground, then filled with the Indian, and strong drawing enticements, the opening covered with brush, a process less hazardous, but certainly as odoriferous.

The chief's dress on special occasions is more elaborate than that of the common Indian. The chiefs generally carry and vigorously use a white eagle-tail beaded-handled fan, in warm weather, and having a more lavish display of mink and otter fur in winter. The constant hand-shaking which these braves thrust upon you almost becomes a nuisance. "How! how!" is the salutation you receive from the friendly disposed. They are at times a gaudy looking set. Some of the veteran scalpers, however, have passed beyond their dudish days, although their coverings are piled on in greater, or lesser degree, owing to the amount of cash, or number of ponies, the owner has.

Old "Whirlwind" was always gorgeous in remarkable ornaments, in bright daubs of paint, wearing a pair of calvary shoulder straps on a vest, moccasins incrusted with beads, while strands composed of alternate beads and shells, and elk-teeth hung around his neck. A brief dispatch from Guthrie, Oklahoma, tells of the death of this Cheyenne brave who led the "Spillman Creek Massacre," and was one of the most noted of the fighting Indians of the southwest. He was in his time the most daring and bloodthirsty chief of the many great fighters of the tribes of the southern plains, outranking Lone Wolf, Yellow Bull, Santana, and even Black Kettle, before whose terrific onslaught the United States Army so often fled in dismayed retreat across the plains.

He was a nephew of Black Kettle, and under him developed into a warrior of tribal reputation at an early age; but it was not until after the bloody massacre led by Colonel Chivington near Denver, in 1864, that he became known and feared by the whites. Immediately after this he took the field as an avenging

The celebrated Cheyenne chief "Whirlwind," with his daughter and grand-children in "Elk-tooth" decorations.

Nemesis, and many are the tales told in Western Kansas of his cruelties and assassinations, as again and again he led his bloodthirsty band of warriors on sanguinary raids from their hiding places in what is now Oklahoma.

It was only a year ago a band of Cheyennes became involved in open conflict with the settlers of Western Oklahoma. When alloting agents were appointed to allot to each man, woman and child, 160 acres of such land as they should select, "Whirlwind" and "Red Moon," who were camping on the old Fort Elliott trail, ran them out of their country, declaring their people had not signed any treaty, the land was theirs, and they had not sold it to anybody. Their tracts were not fenced, the horses and cattle of the white settlers roamed *ad libitum* over their lands, and it could readily be seen how the constant friction between these incongruous elements at last culminated in a bloody fight.

Captain A. E. Woodson, Fifth Cavalry, U. S. A., in charge of the "Cheyenne and Arrapahoe Agency," with his practical ideas, reported to Washington the necessity of adopting some stringent measures with these people, that their tribal relations were as strong and their inclination to live in camps, and idle away their time was as great as it ever was.

A few eagle feathers stuck in a straw hat would be the only civilized garment possessed by one of the comical-looking savages. Many wore stolid countenances, and not much else, as all extra decorations were not counted as necessary, but luxuries. A vest occasionally, rarely a pair of pants; but not a single Indian of the tribe except the police, or employes, was ever known to wear a whole suit of clothes. Whether clad in sumptuous raiment, or shivering in rags, health and power seemed to radiate from these men, either in the light of summer or the cold, blasting winds of winter.

There are high and low grades of society among the

Cheyenne and Arrapahoes as there are with our own white race. While it is impossible to make men equal, because God has put the stamp of inequality upon them, notwithstanding "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, an equal chance, a fair field, and no favor," was declared by the Declaration of Independence; so with these Indians. While wealth and poverty dwelt side by side it took but a glance to distinguish those of aristocratic tendencies. Inflexible, erect of carriage, broad of shoulder, deep of chest, the stalwart men combined dignity with the ease and grace of an earl, while they silently glided along with a steady, measured tread. The "dog-soldier" organization was established for the young Cheyenne bucks, and a membership carried with it a certain social status.

A young army lieutenant, contrasting the upper class of Cheyennes with the western Diggers, used to declare to me the latter did not possess a single redeeming characteristic except to occasionally kill a comrade. "Why," he said, "when I was stationed in their country, in that hissing hot desert land where I prayed for the bleak winds of adversity to fan my blistering brow, and feel the touch of an icy hand, or the freezing glance of a haughty damsel's eye, I knew of a Digger while out near the Upper Klamath prospecting coming across a saponaceous deposit which abounds in Northern California and Nevada, and which he mistook for something more argentiferous. He obtained a chunk of it and waded into a neighboring creek for the purpose of washing it. He was surprised to find that it changed the color of his hands, and it felt so good that he rubbed himself from head to foot with it, dived three or four times into the water, and then made for home. As he approached his camp a score of braves dashed at him with clubs and knives, and, although he screamed in their tongue and declared himself one of their tribe, his exclamations of identity and cries of pain were received with anger and derision, and he was literally hacked and stoned and clubbed to death. Even the squaw of his bosom and his children failed to recognize him, and his own dog barked at him.

The bull's-eye of the exclusive set of Cheyenne women with their calico gowns, their black, glossy hair shining smoothly, drawn over a round forehead and plaited into two large braids which fell forward on either side, and wrapped in a bright red shawl, made a contrast to the half-naked, dirty, unkempt poorer creatures (that presented exaggerated features of squalid misery, filth, and an entire absence of everything like comfort or convenience). The same of their little home-surroundings. You passed a tepee with the appearance of neatness and cleanliness; others with unsightly objects, such as ragged mats, dried boughs, hanging pieces of old cloth, impressing one of groveling misery, while the hovel of wretchedness hid itself from the winds and rain. Revolting as was the outside appearance of some of these places, one was little prepared for the filth and destitution within. Men, women, and children, some clothed, others naked huddled promiscuously together; a revolting state of squalor, concentrated everything that was wretched, dissolute, and loathsome. Born in ignorance, they had sunk into sensual sloth, and reveled in degrading licentiousness. The temptation to add to my stock of curios always proved irresistible, but the odor of jerked beef, which hung from poles, in front of these places, and the offal strewn about, created such a penetrating effluvium that I had no disposition to examine the interiors.

I had one guest, "White-Horse," the son of a noted chief, a dandy in his feathers, a "Claud Melnotte" a "Lord-Adolphus-Grand-seigneur" of the plains, and prominent dog-soldier, that I always treated with the greatest deference. He was tall and straight as an arrow, a Cheyenne warrior every inch of him. An indescribable air of wildness, as palpable as the game flavor of venison, stamped him as, in the parlance of the day, a "thoroughbred." Rather than risk violating the sacredness of hospitality I made heroic efforts to entertain him. A heart less brave, courage less persistent, judgment less sound to plan and will less strong to execute, would have fainted before reaching the Alpha Omega Beta Gamma, for I felt the barrier of reserve, and the crust of ceremony, could only be broken by long acquaintance. His camp was perhaps seventy-five miles away, and he did not come to the Agency often, but when he did he always called, with his almost inseparable companion, "Little Chief of the Northern Cheyennes," who fought with "Sitting Bull" in the great Sioux war of 1876. He would accompany him, but, after a greeting that would chill a graven image, he would go, while "White Horse" would sit for two or three hours, perfectly silent, occasionally giving me a few sweeping motions of sign language, while his amazing dignity and great self-respecting pomposity kept me thinking and wondering.

The majority of the tribes near the Agency always had a faintness and famine of the stomach. They were always ready to extend an impromptu invitation to themselves to dine with you. They were merciless riders, with prairie air appetites. The larder of our house was almost ever open to these people, for superior service was always available. "White Horse" for months would watch a dozen of his race sit at a long table stretched to its utmost, filled with eatables not found at his own wigwam, with unruffled composure, refusing all invitations with such Chesterfieldian quintessent politeness, that I made up my mind to find out why he was different from others, who were just as far from the white man's road.

I commenced by bringing in cake and dainties to him myself in the "parlor." I would have offered him "pearls dissolved in nectar, or rubies boiled in ambrosia, that he might hear the houri sing" if I had kept these articles on tap. Some of my friends, however, thought they had solved the problem by an apprehension that he would soon offer a few ponies, a gun, or a pair of blankets, in value for my hand, but those nearest to me said they were not at all alarmed; they didn't think there was any such good luck.

CHAPTER XII.

WHILE the Indian schools have undoubtedly been engaged in a great work, their seemingly forced economy in having to reduce the expense of maintaining their pupils after a certain number of years has led, in many cases, to startling results. It is said "it is never wise to shorten sail when the wind is favorable, and the harbor in sight." "White Buffalo," a strong example of the strange fitness which generally characterizes Indian names, and often suggested by marked physical peculiarities, was about twenty-five years old, rather tall, well-made, with a cheerful, good-looking, honest countenance, and while the perfect whiteness of his hair at such an age would have been commented on by one of our own race, it was a most singular mark for an Indian, and added wonderfully to his "distingué" appearance.

He was a petted, favored pupil at Carlisle, a military and government school, where the young braves perform their exercises and evolutions in a style, and with an accuracy, that would do credit to the regulars. For years he enjoyed all the privileges and comforts this well-disciplined institution afforded. He received a good every-day education, and "Captain Pratt" had reason to be proud of him. He was brought out on all occasions to meet strangers that they might be impressed with the possibilities, and training of the Indian's intellect. He mastered the intricacies of the tinner's trade, making tin-cups, pie-pans, and other kitchen equipments, proving himself a "kind-of" prize-banner, civilized scholar. The time came when he must be returned to his reservation. Dressed in well-cut dark navy-blue clothes, with a nautical white sailor hat, he had the appearance of an energetic, prosperous young business man. He had a scholastic way of choosing his phrases as well as an up-to-date manner. He talked as long as I would listen to him about his mercantile prospects and intellectual pursuits, spoke most disgustingly of the ignorance, defective domestic training, and habits of the "camp girl" that refused to accept or avail herself of the advantages of a home, or foreign school, in fact "Carlisle" was "writ" large all over him.

The Cheyenne and Arrapahoes were not in the tinning business, and were not caring whether their plates were fluted or straight, or whether they had any at all. Their spoons, made out of buffalo horn worked into shape by the use of grease and heat, and calabash cups and bowls were good enough for them, so the question of employment was a source of great anxiety to this young biscuit-cutter. Stock-raising was the natural industry of the country, and would have been the sensible thing for him to turn his attention to. He was not a "hewer of wood, and drawer of water," and an agricultural life was not congenial to him as it involved painstaking and systematic toil. He had always been bountifully provided for, but the "glory of this world, the flesh-pots of Egypt, the purple and fine linen, the cakes and ale of life," were evidently not for him. When "other refuge—he had none" he retired to his haunts, and while watching the grass wave in perennial glory, meditated over the inconsistency of the government's deficiency. If he preferred his native wilds to the anxieties, perplexities and higher condition of intellect incident to civilization, no flowery sentimentality could give him an ease equivalent to the nomadic habits of his tribe. So prompted both by nature, inclination, and surrounding associations, it was not to be wondered at that he dropped into an indolent life.

I was in need of a large size "angel-food cake-pan," and asked this young man of trade if he was ingenious enough to shape a piece of tin into such an article. He was delighted to have an opportunity to serve me and, with a slightly exaggerated idea of his own importance, he assured me there was nothing in the general utility, utensil, accessory household branch of his line, that he was not familiar with. In a few days he came in with a sober realization of the grand fruition of results, and handed me my order with quite a little civilized presentation speech. The body of the pan was all right in construction, and well made, with good finish, but he had soldered the spout on the bottom, and was holding to it as if it were a handle. I kindly explained to him what was wrong, and while an Indian seldom lets the daylight and ozone of laughter into his damp and dismal soul, in a stoical way he humorously appreciated his mistake, while the employes still enjoy telling about "White Buffalo's angel-cakepan."

Nine years have worn away in the world's usual round since the event I have just recorded. I stopped in front of a smoke-begrimed and dingy encampment some twenty months ago; men were lolling around as braves like to do, women were stirring mixtures in the pots above the fires, untethered bronchos browsed about, half-naked, bronze-skinned children ran at play with their dogs, while many fluttering garments, in which red and yellow predominated, completed what there was to be seen at first glance of a picturesque Cheyenne village. "Starving Elk," who proved to be the head of the band, had dismounted from his pony and gone forward swiftly to his companions. These were already showing signs of perturbed curiosity at the unusual spectacle of a strange foreigner appearing in camp on this extraordinary friendly footing. By a few rapid gestures and words, among which I heard my name as I approached, the whole matter was as thoroughly adjusted as though I had been born of a Cheyenne mother, and had returned from some far country in affluence and honor to my own kind. No pen can describe the marvelous swiftness in which sped the news that I had come may be thousands of miles to visit them. The entire band at once flocked about me. I was almost lifted bodily from my carriage; each member of the tawny community seemed to vie in outdoing the other in kindly greetings, and on every face was a broad and honest expression of welcome. A score or more escorted me to a tepee, where already nimble fingers were laying out moccasins softly tanned, while one deftly pushed through an opening some scarlet-beaded stuff, and others came hurriedly with baby cribs of their marvelous make, until it seemed that the whole camp had been levied upon for my convenience or pleasure, and put to shame by the very surfeit of it all, I cried out, "My, my, for goodness' sake," when they all commenced laughing and chatting at my glad confusion. Just as we were about to leave, one of the many Indians we had been talking to, stepped up behind the carriage, looked through the traditional peep-eye of his blanket at me, and said, "How'do, I'm White Buffalo." "Ye gods and little fishes," I exclaimed, "throw off your covering so I can see you." His white hair had grown long, and hung over his shoulders, while his entire scalp was painted red, and looked all the brighter from the contrast with the white. Here "the privileges of a higher education beautifully exemplified" and his squaw, his sunshine in cloudy weather, his help in perplexities, his refuge in trouble, are living in the sweet Arcadian simplicity of their prairie primeval, with a contempt for the settlement of Darlington, as also its people, preferring the companionship of their tribe, where they can dwell undisturbed in the enjoyment of "dog-fricassee" and the wild aroma of their wigwam.

The announcement of this case may be inferred that it was an isolated one. Far from it. On the contrary, it was the rule. This boy's supposed education is absolutely of no consequence whatever, and has nothing reprehensible about it, so far as reflecting upon education is concerned; but will the beacon-light in the darkness of savage ways, the shining star of progress towards a better conception of the mysteries of uncivilized life, answer the main point wished to be brought out. The education of Indians who were removed from their families and friends, and sent to Carlisle, Hampton, and other eastern institutions did more harm than good. The woman graduates of these schools considered themselves superior to their camp associates, and turned their attention to dissolute white men of the country, to the destruction of morals and decency; while the boys were turned out high-steppers, with their vicious traits sharpened so that they were a more dangerous class than their unlettered brothers. These schools produced a class of flyers, that bid fair to wrest the palm of victory from their old savage fathers. Thrown upon the world without friends, ostracised, despised and condemned by the stalwart warriors of their tribe, and by their former associates and counselors, denied the society of the white people of the country, how else can such an effort to improve them be looked upon other than full of failure. For on his return the young Indian finds many shortcomings in the prairie home he has pictured from the canvas which a fancy had painted in his mind's-eye an El Dorado.

He has been taught a little knowledge of the English language while enjoying much comfort in three hearty meals a day, and a soft, restful bed to sleep in at night, while so doing; but he awakes from a delusion, and discovers his tepee is not corniced with solid gold; he likewise fails to see any of the gorgeous mansions, and princely palaces which he had hoped were yearning to receive him behind their inviting doors. He notices also that few, if any, of the houses on his way had tables set out in front, loaded with dainty viands, that those who hungered might banish their abdominal achings as they walked.

It is a huge practical joke of the Government perpetrated upon him like the wonderful stories of "St.

Louis," told to a poor young Spaniard of Mexico who wanted to leave his country to better his condition. A wag told him the most fabulous and outlandish tales of the wealth and influence of St. Louis people. "Why," he said, his eye lighting up as with the memory of the wonders, "when you get there you will find yourself in a grand salon, surrounded by scenes to gladden the eye and whet the appetite; you proceed to a table covered with the finest of cloths, while a gentle perfume invades your nostrils. The table is laid with gold plate, silver knives and forks, that glisten beautifully." Then, seemingly lost in the memory, he continues, "Fair ladies, gorgeously bedecked and bejeweled, hasten to attend you. You select the one who pleases you most and she waits on you. She eagerly brings what you desire to eat and lays it before you. She then fans you if the day is warm. When you have done she asks permission to give you a bouquet, and, if you consent, she pins one on the lapel of your coat. She then asks where you live. If you condescend to tell her she purchases car-tickets for you. The next morning a bill for 'twenty-five cents' is left at your house and you pay it at your leisure. Then, when you ascend the steps of your 'boarding-house' that you have chosen as a home, the door is softly opened and you are shown into a parlor where the carpets are a foot thick. Fine tapestry adorns the walls, and golden and crystal chandeliers are suspended from the ceiling. Musical instruments of every description are distributed about the walls and room. 'The evening meal' is a banquet. Beautiful ladies and noble men gather, and the tables are loaded down with everything an epicurean could think of. After eating, the proprietress asks you if you will go for a drive. If you say yes, she orders a carriage sent around, and you go. If you wish, you are at liberty to invite one of the beautiful young ladies to accompany you. For all this you are charged five dollars a week!'"

It was wicked to send this poor young Mexican foreigner to a strange land where it was likely every one would gaze with curious eyes, and perhaps unfeeling ones, upon him; where he believed vast riches, gorgeous palaces, Elysian fields, in which wandered fair ladies and proud men, and where flowers bloomed and birds sang, awaited him.

So with the savage. He should be taught universal knowledge and manual labor on his own ground, and among his own people, to be better able to cope with the miseries, hardships, and utter wretchedness that befalls mankind in general, and the Indian in particular.

Ex-Governor Robinson, superintendent of Haskell Institute, who was rounding a noble life with the completest success as an Indian educator, when he died a short time ago, was visited by a very ignorant and a very repulsive negro from the Creek nation. He came to demand one of the brightest young girls in the "Lawrence school" as his ward, and determined to make her his wife. He was toothless, and old, and ugly. He was the guardian of the bright young Indian girl, and thus claimed the right, under the Creek law, to take her back to degradation and slavery and make a wife and a drudge of a young woman rapidly being educated and becoming as accomplished as the daughter of the best in the land. Governor Robinson, being a man of nerve, and of extreme good sense, gave the brutalized specimen of negro and Indian blood just three minutes to remove his dark presence from the white man's tepee, and he returned to his vagabond life in the Indian territory.

The same with the churches: they are all doing good, but they should work in unison, and not against each other. Philanthropists, while meaning well, from a lack of knowledge of the nature of an Indian, fail to treat him understandingly. The red brave, hereditarily suspicious, is mystified at the teaching he presumably thinks emanates from the "Great Spirit of the white man," and asks why the missionary talks crooked, and speaks disparagingly of the salvation afforded by a rival church. He naturally concludes their beliefs are all "bad medicine," and the simple truths of our religion are not to be compared with the sacredness of the frenzied dances and incantations of his own Indian mythology.

The corner-stone of Christianity is, "To do unto others as you would that they should do unto you;" and, if pretenders were more practical in hanging this golden rule in the temple of their hearts, there would be less bickerings and more wholesome happiness among our own boasted veneer of civilization, and less necessity for attack or attempt to supplant one denomination for another in a savage country. Let the ministers of the Gospel gather courage and turn more of their attention to alleviating the picturesquely-styled living troubles of their own nation, that are worse to bear than anything else included in the gamut of possible human suffering; these griefs which are hidden, which throb fiercely behind smiling faces, which stick their dagger-thrust under the decencies and civilities of life, as they walk through the shadow of bereavement; such things that demonstrate clearly cases with which the intellectual product of the nineteenth century lapses backward to the barbarian's unbridled passions.

Cardinals Gibbons and Ryan, of the Catholic Bureau, have just held a called meeting to discuss Indian missions, or government schools, and it seems they are "not on the list;" but they decided there would be no arraignment of "Secretary Hoke Smith's" administration of the Indian Bureau of the Interior Department by the Catholic bishops; leaving these charges to be investigated by Congress or otherwise. Now, it is well known that there is not a more capable or faithful set of people on the face of the globe than this creed in Indian mission schools and public hospitals, where suffering humanity of whatever faith has been sheltered by hovering within shadow of the wide-spreading badge of a Sister of Charity.

The dignified, consistent manner in which this denomination has made public the fact and given out the information that they have no grievance against the government, but will take active steps to make their schools self-supporting, would do credit to the little black urchin's rebuke as he passed along a down-town street, and saw a stump of a cigar fall on the sidewalk in front of a store. He made a second-base slide for it, and when he had it safely corraled beneath him, he rolled his eyes around the points of the compass to see if another gamin had also seen the stump fall.

"Dat war in Cuba is making Havanas skace, an' you can't take no chances," he remarked, as he brushed off the ash and blew away the sand and dust from the coveted snipe. Going into the store, he said to the proprietor:

"Boss, gimme a match, please, sah."

"Matches are not here to give away, but to sell," said the proprietor, assuming a look of intense severity.

"Dey is, eh?"

"That's what they are."

"Well, how much is dey er box?"

"One cent."

The gamin tilted the stump in one corner of his mouth, held to the band of his pantaloons with one hand, ran the other hand in his pocket and pulled forth a copper.

"Gimme a box." And he laid down a cent.

He got the box, struck a match, lit the stump so well that it poured forth volumes of smoke, and then, handing the box back to the proprietor, assumed a look of intense severity, and said:

"Put dat box on de sheff, an' de nex' time a gemmen come in hyar an' ax you fer a match, you gin him one outen my box."

Why, wouldn't it be a seemingly good Christian, subrosa scheme for the Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, and the thousand other beliefs, to get rid of this class of worshipers by sending them on the border, out of reach, where they could do no harm, and perhaps get killed, while they themselves take down the avenues after "Emigrators," Dissenters, Dynamiters, Anarchists, Secret Societies, A. P. A.'s, roof-garden stars, and "Masons." A dangerous point in the last case occurred in Indiana this week, being that of a man who was on trial in the Superior Court for an offense, when his brother took a seat directly in front of the presiding Judge, who was a prominent Mason, and proceeded to give the "Masonic sign of distress," which was quickly recognized by the Judge and Masons of the jury. The Judge, with a little manhood left, told the man not to interfere with the proceedings, and he sent him to jail for contempt of court. The man denied that he had made any Masonic sign, but the Judge declared he did boldly, and for effect in the case. The man threatened to appeal to the Grand Lodge for vindication—a recourse understood to be a "canon" of this great and only institution; and if the indignant does what he said he would do, and he probably will, the red and blue and the little bright starlight signs will be lighted, horns will be sounded, zephyrs wafted to send him a promotion higher; for these white-plumed knights of high degree, in the protection of widows and orphans, are practically up on the Ten Commandments, and the order is known to be full of principle, and to admit members "irrespective of previous condition," and stand by them for the same reason. Indiana will rise to a Mason, each breathing an air of assured position and self-possessed hauteur, upholstered with many layers of self-complacency, and defended by a full arsenal of ready tact and other appliances for maintaining their great personal dignity; in the vernacular of the day, they will give that Judge "the marble heart and a stony stare," in the sublimity of real disdain never attained by the nobles and courts of King Solomon himself, for presuming to doubt the honor, integrity, and veracity of a member of their tribe.

CHAPTER XIII.

It is pitiful to see the ostentatious homage extended a rich and worldly-influential *roué*, while the door of condolence is shut in the face of the genuinely deep and poignant calamity of a poor unfortunate who is trying to do his duty to God and his fellow-creature. It seems great souls shall live in small houses, while mean ones lurk in mansions, and the race for money continues. The danger is, that, with the abnormal fortunes given to some, and the awful poverty held upon others, that by and by the manhood of American men and the womanhood of American women will break down, and after that gold will not secure for a day the life or the honor of the nation.

There are examples enough. There never was a grander race, in some respects, than that of old Rome. "It took but a little while for that power to descend so low as to become the pity of mankind. For five hundred years there was not one unfaithful matron known. A few hundred years later, out of five hundred Roman matrons, there were very few who were known to be faithful, because poverty and misfortune had done their perfect work. The womanhood of the great nation had broken down under the strain, and after that the child of the Roman mother was not fit to become a Roman soldier. The same disintegration and decay overtook Spain, commencing when the treasures from the New World began to fall off. And Americans are not stronger than were the men of Rome —not stronger than were the men that Cortez led into the depths of Mexico."

The country needs better schools and more of them, and they need more than all else combined home missionaries, where the evangelical work of all creeds are not afraid to teach sterling ancient integrity in the humble homes and the rich ones alike; where every child must be trained, and where honor is cultivated from the cradle up.

A bright and witty woman correspondent was chatting a few days ago with a well-known man in the world of science and educational progress, when their discussion fell upon the decadence of this latter end of the century. As a philosopher and a scientist she asked him what he thought of the outcome of all this freedom of thought and action in which we are indulging to-day. This investigation of human sins that strips the last thread from the form of modesty; this easy exhibition of everything that should not be exhibited. "Yes, it is pretty bad," he said. "I don't think it's because we are growing older and see things through prudish eyes either. I tell you things are tolerated and discussed now, that would not have been dreamed of ten years ago." "I believe," he continued, "that the Chicago fair had more to do with demoralizing America than anything else. I think the introduction of the low foreign element at the Midway Plaisance was the worst thing morally that this country has ever known. It spread the thought and the knowledge of that vile scene in the streets of Cairo throughout a nation."

There is no doubt that the moral sensibilities of the country were blunted, the moral tone lowered, and all the instincts of decency insulted and outraged by such exhibitions that every visitor will remember as he was beset by the heterogeneous mass of "flakes" and barbarities, antiques and moderns, celestials and terrestrials, and if he accepted the invitation of the old Turk who stood at the head of an outside stairway attracting a crowd by his wild antics, yelling "Dancy geals! Bootifool dancy geals! Dis is de way! Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-aye!"

The people of the State of Georgia have not fallen so low in the scale that they would submit to a continuation of the shocking spectacle, and the Legislature's action in the decisive vote to suppress the "dance du ventre," one of the most odious features of vice introduced in this country, is considered an honor to the state. Man is so little advanced from savagery that constant instruction line upon line appears to be necessary to prevent the relapse of each generation to a state of barbarism. The old original chivalrous Southern types of the Southern States in their genial good-fellowship, who have always been known "whether before the courts of Europe, or in the Senate of United States, or at a card-table" to be gentlemen, are now, in their desire for prosperity, soliciting emigration and offering their prolific cotton country and sunny clime where snows are only known of in far-off countries, and blizzards in the mind's eye, as a dumping-ground to the shifting population of these United States. They are not the good old antebellum days of log-rollin's, and corn-shuckings they are advertising, where the fire sparkled and glowed in the big fire-place in the great white-pillared house on the old plantation, and the pickaninnies in the little cabin on de hillside were all roun', de whites er deir eyes gleamin' wid happiness watchin' mammy turn the hoe-cake sizzin' on the griddle, while Uncle Zip cut de pigeon-wing: life would be simplified in some of its aspects if the same thing were always called by the same name: like the Yankee passing through Georgia thirty odd years ago when he facetiously accosted an old darkey with the question:

"I say, Uncle, are there any Huguenots about here?"

The respectful negro looked surprised, doffed his old head-covering, and with a profound bow answered the question by another.

"Well, I declar, fo' law, Massa, whar you cum from?"

"From way up North, where if you want a tunnel built in the atmosphere a fellow will construct it for you on long payments, and suspend it by cables from the moon so you can go to different quarters of the world at all times of the night or day," said this man of many brilliant parts.

"Well, I thought so! Why, in Tennessee they call 'em peanuts, in South Carolina they call 'em ground peas, in Alabama they is penders, here in Georgia we call 'em goobers, and now sah, you takes my breath 'way, off dar in dat funny kind' a place callen 'm hugnots. Fo 'loud! Well, I do declare."

Why will the South not take advantage of the opportunity in their established reputation for gentility, dignity, culture, and hospitality in their homes before the war, to join the few out-spoken, God-fearing, to annihilate, or at least modify by law, precept, or otherwise, the "Devil-up-to-date," who, in prowling around investigating the brilliancy of the moon, and the exact ratio of one star to another in its light-giving powers compared to earthly capacity, has taken possession of every section of this mosaic Union. The sod looks fair and green, but if up-turned by the spade the hideous crawling worms come to view. It is true this product has lost self-respect, and he is understood to be unscrupulous, but it is felt that nothing succeeds like success, and this fact excuses very much. When an individual has attained a position which enables him to be useful to the public when it will subserve a personal interest or promote an inordinately selfish scheme, his polished deviltries and submerged corruptions become as virtues, and he is urgently solicited to join what is called the highest circles of polite society, and is soon known as the type of the species who flit across the maelstrom of depraved social life. But the law of compensation, if nothing else, sets the price on all favors of fate, and however shining the environments, there is no exception to the rule. The world only steps up higher in order to obtain a better point of view. Because "Napoleon," the dominant French spirit of his time, climbed so high, because of the strength of his personality, no one dared to cut his throat, yet at the height of his power he had his overthrow, and was killed by inches in exile. Because he was an embodiment of selfish ambition who shrank from no crime that would further his purposes and who never allowed a disinterested generous impulse to direct his conduct, it could not be done all at once, there was not one hand in all the world caring enough to lay the ax upon him, but the ways of Providence are inscrutable, and with all the glory that surrounds his name, every human heart beats in sympathy with his wronged and discarded wife, while this "beast that peopled a continent with widows and orphans, sowed the valleys thick with graves to appease his inordinate vanity, paused at the evening of a greater disaster and found himself a Waterloo."

> "'Tis not decreed that every man should climb the heights of fame,
> And write among the stars of earth his record and his name;
> Success to all who seek the palm is not the original plan,
> But no one ever sought in vain to be a gentleman."

God has made us social creatures, and society, where people who are considerate and amiable to each other and draw themselves together to show their brighter and better side, is as much a divine institution as the Church; but the "small sweet sacred courtesies of life" no longer exist, "a jar of Egyptian vipers is the heart and soul" of a certain so-called exclusive set of social people. The condemnation of evil when it has the financial patronage of a community requires a heroism that moral guides shrink from denouncing. It is up-to-date to ignore wrong-doing, and they give it a qualified approval. Polite generalities in the pulpit about the ugliness of sin and the evil consequences to which it will lead do not suffice, for the honest teacher of right and wrong knows if he stands up unflinchingly to his text he will have to face much abuse and perhaps persecution; but there should be a divine rage against anything that wars on the marriage state. There is no necessity for becoming a fanatic, or being sensational, but unfortunately there are many "Aunt Maria thoughts" scattered over the country.

"Joshua," remarked the old lady to her nephew, "why in the name of goodness did you ever become a preacher?" this after she had heard him in the pulpit for the first time.

"Because, Aunt Maria," he replied, "I was called."

"Ugh," she exclaimed, "maybe you was, but all I've got to say is, you held a mighty poor hand."

Man in his most egotistic flights of vanity is untamable, unruly, unconquerable, all thundering in chorus; to manage him has become a lost art. He is tough; he hails from Toughesville, down Tougherie's row, and he lives in the last house. Kate Douglas Wiggin was correct when she said, "it was a pity that the material with which he was made couldn't be utilized for manufacturing purposes." Think of its value for hinges, or for the toes of little boys' boots, or the heels of their stockings. A great innovation needed in the march of civilization to subdue the savageness of his nature is "the new man," with righteousness for a foundation and the semblance of truth for a corner-stone. Marriage is unquestionably a divine institution, but it is one of the fates decreed in the "sarcasm of destiny" that, while not exactly a failure, it is known to be principally constructed on the plan of "job lots," and "misfits," becoming as it were a compact conglomeration. It is learned in a whisper from the gentle winds and howling cyclones, that love of the crept-into-every-crevice-of-my-heart-and-filled-it-to-its-uttermost kind, is not the only thing which can make life as clear as noon-day seem clothed in roseate hues; while borne along in a portentous storm on irresistible wings of moaning comes the information that all men and women are not always happily married; and in such cases it sometimes happens in the year of the comets a heart, wicked or otherwise, may stray from the beaten path of rectitude. There is nothing reprehensible in taking a drink of whiskey, but it is the abuse of many that makes the act one of disgust. Any woman may be interesting to a man so long as she is not one's wife, the indulgence of this fact being, however, fraught with risk and danger in favor of the drawbacks; for while much depravity of this stamp is condoned, the way of the transgressor is hard as "Sims" found out in seeking biblical information, after having met with an unfortunate experience.

"Dere's anudder one ob dem parables, Deacon," he said, "What eber came ob Lot's wife?"

"Ah!" answered the old darkey preacher in great dilemma as to the correct interpretation to what he believed an inspired question, and wishing to give an emphatic warning lesson to this seemingly upright pillar of the church, "Brer Sims, dat's bad. Many is de man w'at got hisself in trouble, 'quirin for anodder man's wife."

Most of men, in their overweening conceit and capacity of the race, only ask women to be forever young and forever pretty. Let your conscience go to the bow-wows, keep your freshness, for virtue fails to atone for wrinkles, hence you can not dictate to a man's heart, but you can to his manhood and honor (if he knows anything about the latter commodity). He can lose his heart every day in the week, but when he loses his head he is gone, a fatal disaster that frequently overtakes the snowy blossoms of creeping age and bald heads; for it is generally observed that after the cares of life and a starving heart have erased some of the bright lines from the face of a wife, the monarch that would do credit to a Bedouin chief suddenly awakes to a fancied realization that for years he has been living with a cross between a "wild Fee-Jee islander," and a "crazy Hottentot," and if the poor thing don't go off and die with the white frosts of eternal death that kill the orange blossoms; sweep herself from the face of the earth into the cobwebs of the moon; go mad; or commit some other equally light frivolity for accommodation, she is thrown into the scorching simoon of a desert to make her living as best she can, or drag herself through the disgrace of a divorce court to secure a competence to keep body and soul together, while this roaming-at-large barbarian in a pretended civilized country declares "Love is not love that alters when it alteration finds," and accordingly proceeds to break his clanking chains that he may be more closely allied to the true angel that he has at last found outside of his long binding bonds. A stamp of such a deplorable race that would allow this indignity to impose upon the sacredness of a patient, suffering, serving creature is but a step removed from the pagan. Let the husband honor the wife, and just in proportion as the wife is honored will the home be made happy. A Mecca solution found for the weary victims of conjugal woe.

There is an immense amount of truth in the fact that hundreds of men who pass before their associates as "good fellows" have an entirely different reputation at home, a place intended for happiness and elevation of mankind, and the only circle where the true rest of life can be found,—a place which makes or breaks for time and eternity, charged with gigantic joy or sorrow, a heaven or hell. In the majority of men of the world, of the well-fed-prosperous-look variety, who are known everywhere by an abbreviation of their name or a short title and are regarded as "bon vivants," whose dual life and disgusting stories are told and retold, and who would probably be spoken of, if they were to die next week, in all morning papers as "the prince of good fellows."

His home hasn't seen a happy hour in twenty years. His poor wife, long since having to close the door of her heart with a bang against his tyranny and relentless selfishness, mourning in tears of blood for the lost affection of her youth and the father of her children, whom he was instrumental in bringing in the world, while he is the first to treat a crowd, open a basket of wine and bottles galore, set out the Havanas, making his down-town offices a glittering allurement for the unweary—but at home there! He is a poor man! "He can't afford such expense." It's true he frequently puts up at the Waldorf and Palmer "Inns" with some of his friends, and tells you that his public charities, to say nothing of his private ones, are from six to eight and ten dollars a day; and as a great promoter to a large circle of relations, and other beneficiaries, his telephone lines are extended over the length and breadth of the land. "But the wife and mother!" has never possessed an evening-dress in all their married years. This gentleman of noble and generous impulses to the widows and orphans at large tells this cherished partner of his bosom, in picturesque language, that would make the cold chills run through a graven image, that it was not necessary for money to be squandered on such articles; and while she is thankful to sneak off and make herself contented with the clothing of her right mind, he appears radiant and bewildering in claw-hammer adamant barbarism trimmed with great absorbing beauty, sounding the march of triumph, oblivious to all but his own estimate of his weighty incalculable value.

Once upon a time, among those who listened to a man's "no questions asked" when he announced "That he'd spend his money as he liked, come and go when he liked, stay out as late as he liked, and come home when, how, or in what condition he liked, without putting in an excuse with his appearance, was a woman, a timid, tearful, humble mortal, who didn't dare say anything; but some way her thoughts turned to a tombstone she had seen in a city cemetery. It was a rather pretentious slab, and across the top was blazoned a man's name, and down below, as if shrinking away, even in marble, a woman's Christian name, with the further inscription: "Wife of the above-mentioned." He wasn't dead at all (such men generally do survive), but he couldn't let her have even a tombstone to herself, so he put her away down in the corner and filled the public eye with his own personality. That was the end of a truly humble woman. Fortunately, Nemesis, in the form of a second wife, overtook that man; for it some times happens that a woman who is all humility and deference before marriage develops startling self-assertion immediately after, and the man who started out with the intention of addressing her as "You, there!" found himself saying, "Ma'am," a month after the ceremony. He gave up every penny he earned, and got his tobacco-money doled out, carried coal, ran to the grocery, shook the rugs, sifted the ashes, peeled the potatoes, and crawled off to business with his erstwhile haughty spirit limper than his linen.

A more than sensible writer in her cure for divorce solves the primary cause of ninety-nine-one-hundredths of the cases in which it is said women are to blame. She suggests "That a law be enacted by which the husband settle enough pin-money on his wife to be gauged by the position in which they live," all of which would be superlatively good, and I would add in other words, "Chain the bear or savage" to something stronger than the poor defenceless woman who is trying to hide the pain that she has to endure. She knows the man she has loved a life-time is absolutely, constitutionally, and continually unfaithful to her. He boasts of it to her, tells her to help herself, asks her what she is going to do about it; and they say to her he is not worth having, he is not worthy of her; but her face is in the fire, she who is only a woman, remembering the ninety and nine, who are safe and waiting to welcome back the one who is "lost, strayed, or stolen," only women can do this; God made them that way.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE name of good society applied to a certain class of wealthy and fashionable people in any city, carries with it a certain weight. People expect good society to be respectable, and if rumors float here and there, concerning the characters of its devotees, they should be weeded out and ostracized. It is a pretty shady thing for people in a boasted respectable organization to swallow great, big black, unquestionable facts; and when they do so, the result must be a general social taint that must lower the standing of a vaunted decency in the eyes of all clear-thinking people. The institution of marriage is defamed by such parasites, and it is these influences that are turning the earth into a

Turkish harem, and a great Salt Lake City; they even going so far in their ingenuity to introduce some highly unique standards of sanity to further their sinful purposes. A woman in one of the States was sent to the Asylum for the Insane not long ago, because she refused to live with her brutal husband.

Although having sworn at the altar to cherish and protect his wife, a man in his baseness and treachery will proudly permit a notorious woman of the half-world to be generally known by his name, publicly debauch himself in champagne banquets, nightly carouse, and widely proclaim his unbridled vices by reaching over and blowing away in disgrace the happiness, the very existence of his faithful companion, committing murder as effectually as if the deed were done with one blow, and as easily as if the fact were a feather, or a dandelion blossom, and yet be lionized, and cordially recognized by mothers and daughters, while the men, to vie with their standard of virtue in such moral laxity, turn over the keys of the town to him. Where a man holds the sanctity of his home, and the honor of the wife of his bosom and of the mother of his children at such a value, and is countenanced by such degrading and loathsome opinions of family life and human affections, they strike the lowest note of depravity, and are worthy only of human brutes that in morality are far below the beasts that perish.

If personal honor, self-respect and pride of family be mere idle sentimentality then marriage is lowered to the condition of a savage; and the combined efforts of working Christianity had better direct their whole attention to home-product, and stem the tide of dissolution. Women who would not strike you as being up to a poet's dream, or an artist's inspiration, but the very bull's-eye of pretense, having figure-heads as husbands for protection (although they themselves away most of the time, playing on the steps of the penetentiary) flauntingly give receptions, card-parties, dinners, starlights, moonlights, and allnights to unscrupulous married men, ignoring their wives, whose dismal swamp of married experience is known to be treeless, flowerless, shelterless, comfortless, and godless, and who would not be half so much to blame in the sight of the Unknown for cheating you out of your house and lot, as by defrauding these wives out of the happiness of a lifetime. They kneel down in their flagrance to pray at their church, while the mildewed spots of degradation seen in the lower strains of humanity can never excel the brazen monstrosities and deeds of this upper excuse for respectability, trying to defy public opinion. Let the enthusiastically-disposed heathen missionary of the Chinese order stay at home and look after this flock in his own "Land of the free and home of the brave," and as a quiet diversion from his cannibalistic escapes, hunt up the bewildering display and shocking exposure of the backs and busts of "Mrs. Gemsen Weed," and "Seymore;" and in order to refine, correct and elevate the public taste, hastily secure a "venetian-red Cheyenne blanket, with over-jacket of rag-carpeting, held in place with a coupling pin," and moderately cover a few of their striking physical possessions before they expend all their energies and possibilities on the "Sun-dance tribes," whose power of faith can be no more strongly exemplified in any race or sect than is manifested among these semi-barbarous, ignorant people; for the constant thought of every Indian, man or woman, is, "How shall I evade or counteract the power of the Bad God?"

Through the influence of missionaries, a few individuals on the strictly flour-and-beef-what-are-you-going-to-give-me basis, may have come to believe in a Great Spirit ruling both this and the future life, but he will show that the "faith in them" is assumed, and without any foundation in conviction, for it has seldom been known that a so-called Christian Indian did not in times of real trouble or affliction go back to his ancient faith. Let the religious unite as one, and send emissaries into the towns to suppress the immoral stories, teaming with "free-love theories" administered in large doses, that are flooding the country, pandering to low natures to drag down what better men are trying to build up, corrupting all classes, both young and plastic, to exaggerating the crystallized and hardened. The nation has become so morally depraved that a well-known man, who had at one time some little reputation as a scientist, has thrown science aside, and declared boldly for sin. He has just finished a licentious story, that was so immoral that, be it to his credit, an honored Editor refused to publish. It was written for the sake of gain in dollars and cents, knowing the public's flagrantly indecent, insatiable, appetite, and it would be by his instrumentality gratified.

In the face of all this, sincerely good representatives of the different religious denominations in their wisdom of mission work continue to agitate the Government as to who shall preach the true faith to the "Savage," forgetting that the good Lord in His mercy is looking down on us all, and will give a fairer chance to the poor red-man, paint and feathers thrown in, to a seat in sanctification than he will to the educated men and women of their own boasted civilized country that is reeking with lechery and intrigue.

In 1735, John Wesley crossed the water to Savannah, with General Oglethorpe, to civilize the Cherokees in Georgia, but in two years returned to England disgusted, to find that he had not been converted himself. Just in proportion to enlightenment as pyramids of sin go up in height, will they come down in ghastliness of ruin.

"The American Board of Foreign Missions," has compiled a summary of the statistics of Protestant missionaries sent out to evangelize the world, the total being 11,574. This number of well meaning people have been sent by the above association into wild countries to meet perils and difficulties, in their work arguing that human sarcifices, slavery, polygamy, and all other barbarous practices would disappear before the influences of the Cross: while perhaps this planting of civilization conformable to our notions was in most cases a mere blotting paper, absorbing what was most superficial and undesirable, as no one solution will fit a different race, climate, or act of conditions.

We deplorably need at home "The Great Religious Conference" that has just been called together in the south; for no similar meeting has ever been held in this country, and the movement stands without a precedent, or a parallel. The purpose for which this monster parliament was inaugurated and the object sought to be accomplished is the purification of the nation's life; a motive that can but gain the applause. and admiration of the world, for it is to be national in character.

It is the purpose of those who stand behind the movement and whose characters give to it the highest indorsement which could possibly be asked, to have every State, section, and denomination of the Union represented. In this way attention is called to the fact that something is wrong and that heroic remedies are needed to purify the country. The character of the men who have signed the call gives emphasis to its importance. Judge W. R. Hammond has worn the judicial ermine of the Fulton Superior Court, and is recognized as a man of sound judgment and ability. Ex-Governor William J. Northen is known throughout the country as one of the purest men in public life, as are also the entire list of names appended.

Let the deliberators start this great wheel of reform by reaching out for men that by example are corrupting the world, turning good into evil, deepening their folly into crime by right of their moneyed position, and proclaim in clarion notes, in strict right and justice married women, old and otherwise, grandmothers, and young matrons alike who occupy pride and place in this world's standing and who have not the excuse of poverty for selling themselves to the devil.

It is an open secret in our great cities, that there are women, beautiful, brilliant, and fascinating, whose relations with public men high in the councils of the nation are either perfectly understood, or suspected, who are met at every turn, at the most fashionable functions, often in the receiving line, or elegantly dressed as usual, presiding in the tea-room, or acting as assistant hostesses. Society knows all this, but so powerful has been the influence of the names back of them that no one has had the courage to drop the women, or rebuke the men.

This is the phase of reformation needed, and if Christian people of our land fail much longer to assert themselves in this direction, the republic will be dominated by vice and immorality, and wickedness will reign supreme; marriage will become a partnership dissolved by mutual consent. Teach the world the best, greatest, purest, and worthiest things in life are beyond all market value, and the gifts of the gods are not for sale. The change that is needed for the moral tone of American Society is a change of standard. Abolish the standard which men have set for women; not less purity for women, should be the rule, but more purity for men.

Rob the world of the modest mother, and you become at once the murderer of religion, the destroyer of peace, and the uprooter of all that is beautiful and magnanimous. Restrain the man from running riot, and preserve the sacredness of the marriage-tie; for woman was not made to be his slave, but his equal: not merely to soothe him in his sorrows but to share them: not to be the recipient of his bounty, but the divinely ordained partner of his ambitions.

"The Great Religious Conference" should join the "Two Million Christian Endeavorers," by helping them along their line of work for the advancement of "Christian Citizenship." The question is assuming serious proportions; and the world will not materially improve until men themselves regard this matter in a different light, and realize that the immorality of a husband, or father, reflects as much disgrace upon a family as the immorality of a woman, or mother. "Prudery" has hitherto worn for name's sake a thin mantle, but in this up-to-date whirl of boldness and self-display the covering has been snatched off.

In every age in which women are more or less subordinate, men are more or less brutal. The despotic who fashions everything to suit himself, even public opinion, should be made to understand he has overstepped his limit, and that he can no longer maintain his dictatorship unless he consents to make laws for the purpose of self-protection less elastic, and repeal the ones hammered from unbending steel, constructed for the weaker vessel. Under the present régime it is right for a man to be vicious—more than that it is rather praiseworthy. Society should commence to set the seal of their emphatic disapproval upon men who lead infamous lives, and place them under the stigma of disgrace, and admitted corruption: while it is high time for the good women of the country, and ministers of the Gospel to rise up and demand an equal standard of respectability for both men and women, and to punish a lapse from that standard alike in both.

I doff my appreciation to "Marie Correlli," Queen Victoria's favorite novelist, for giving us "The Sorrows of Satan," which is a general criticism of depraved London society: where she exposes the low life of high life. "Wealth is like Genius," says the hero, bestowed not for personal gratification, but for the benefit of those who lack it. You have done without God, so you THINK: Every act of your existence has been for the pleasure and advancement of Yourself,—and this is why I have chosen you out to hear and see what few mortals ever hear or see till they have passed the dividing line between this life and the next. I have chosen you because you are a type of the apparently respected and unblamable man:—you are not what the world calls a criminal:—you have murdered no one:—you have stolen no neighbor's goods:

—your unchastities and adulteries are those of every "fashionable" vice-monger:—you are guilty nevertheless of the chief crime of the age,—Sensual Egotism, the blackest sin known to either angels or devils, because hopeless. The murderer may repent, and save a hundred lives to make up for the one he snatched,—the thief may atone with honest labor,—the adulterer may scourge his flesh and do grim penance for late pardon,—the blasphemer may retrieve his blasphemies—but for the Egoist there is no chance of wholesome penitence since to himself he is perfect, and counts his Creator as somewhat inferior! This present time of the world breathes Egotism—the taint of Self, the hideous worship of money corrodes all life, all thought, all feeling, Heaven is barred out,—God is denied,—and Destruction darkens over this planet, known to all angels as the Sorrowful Star! Be no longer blind millionaire whose millions have ministered to Self!—for when the world is totally corrupt,—when Self is dominant,—when cunning supersedes honesty,—when gold is man's chief ambition,—when purity is condemned,—when poets teach lewdness, and scientists blasphemy,—when love is mocked, and God forgotten,—the end is near."

CHAPTER XV.

I was being soothed into a comfortable assurance as I enjoyed the soft cadence of the evening breeze, and listened to the unceasing muffled sound of the "tom-tom," when, through the white radiance of moonlight that made the world almost unearthly, and the beautiful Canadian River flowing peacefully down the valley like a sheen of silver, there appeared within the compass of my vision, eighteen or twenty Cheyennes, silently coming in single file through the gate toward me. "Adam's natal day to kingdom come," I exclaimed, but I discovered at once this mysterious visitation was composed of the friendly braves of the tribe. True, the fabric of such friendship was only good for summer using, the texture would not stand much wear and tear, but they were all "chief counsellors," celebrated for their prowess in securing "chuck-a-way" (rations), as well as their wisdom in obtaining it. They were all celebrated for the fleetest runners, and the best shot in this direction. Enveloped in their white sheets they strode in a stately way down the long gallery, the soft tread of their moccasins giving the only sound to warn one of their presence. Being old fellows of fine physique, they were selected for their fitness for the duty in which they found so much satisfaction, and the one thing in life that actuates the Indian to unusual exertion. Meet any one of these solid "chunks of wisdom" a dozen times a day, and he would be sure to give you a beseechingly pathetic look, accompanied by an expressive sawing motion of the hand from right to left across the dividing line of the body, suggesting starvation. Their coming in such numbers and at such an hour was a foreboding of something unusual, but, with a coolness and diplomacy that carried me safely through my predicament, they were invited into the house. They were an overdressed, undressed, fixed-up crowd. Being excessively fond of finery they generally had something extra for special occasions, adopting some article of the white man's clothing to dim their barbaric splendor, and to emphasize to the pale face that their "heart was good."

They seated themselves in a semicircle in front of the White Chief to talk. A wilder looking crew could scarcely be imagined—cunning, duplicity, treachery, were stamped upon every lineament. Many had their tobacco pouches, that were beautifully beaded, painted, porcupine-quill-worked and fringed. A pipe about four feet long was produced, the kinnik-i-kinnic lighted, a few leisurely whiffs taken, when it continuously went the rounds during the rest of the evening. "Wolf Face," the head orator, and the champion "chuck-a-way" fiend, occupied the center of the group. He would puff away and in intervals murmur over a few incomprehensible sounds which were responded to by the others with a "Ugh Ugh." Cloud Chief, with elaborate scalp ornament (which is now in my collection), sat at the right. His manner was striking and his oratory the embodiment of dignity and elocutionary effect. He was one of the most progressive of the Cheyennes. One wild, battered hulk of humanity, with a dogged, resolute countenance that had passed the heyday of prosperity, was recognized as being steeped in crime, having enjoyed many scalp-lifting excursions, but now, through policy, was masking behind an air of respectability, practicing his blandishments of peace on the "White Chief," but it was not impossible to suspect the native savagery lurking under a manner so reassuring.

A gaudy necktie, but no shirt, with a sheet loosely wrapped around his nether extremities, fanning himself with an elaborate white-eagle-tail fan with red flannel streamers, was a breezy and refreshing sight of one that must have expended much thought and all his ingenuity, and to its elaboration brought all his skill and patience to reach such an effect. Another wore a cocked hat on one side of his head with great *éclat*, ornamented with feathers and bunches of sacred, or medicine grass, that was not removed during the proceedings. The subject is too tremendous in this dash of life and reality, to give a symmetrical impression of this throng, as in their low sweet voice of grunts, their hearts sang out their little crafty song of peace, and love for the Great Spirit, White Chief and Father at Washington, while they wound up by asking for a "beef."

An invitation to partake of the hospitality of our house possessed a fascination for these men, akin to the eating of lotos-blossoms. A long table was conveniently arranged for those who from day to day were favored. "Joe," an extra contingent of fourteen years, as head-waiter and body-servant, reserved the high honor of presiding over their feast. This boy was a true negro type, as black as the ace of spades, and possessed a vein of good-nature and broad humor, that seems to be born within the intellect of even the most unpromising of his race. He would stop in the midst of his duties to give a whirl, quick revolution, or a "double-shuffle" while the grim savages would seem entertained with the antics of his supple joints.

Often when the sun was hot, during the day, the report would come to me "that they could'nt get any work out of Joe." Music was his marked feature. I would find him full of home-made happiness, sitting on the fence under the cottonwood tree shade, with his mouth-harp, holding a dozen or more feather-bedecked savages, spell-bound with his patent melody, or in the shade down by the saw-mill, where a little coolness could be found, standing on the sandy beach, exulting in the possession of a monster minnow bucket and a great can of worms, enticing the voracious catfish from their lair, attending strictly to business waiting for a bite. Droll enough was the scene when he would try to teach the little wild Indian in his abbreviated shirt-tail and solemn sullen face, the rudiments of his steps of "balance" and "turn your pardner." He would try the strength and agility of each one in their games, and I could hear him trying to make them understand how far he could run without getting "winded." As they "sprinted" up and down the road in their scanty costumes I always found them a pleasing spectacle, for, in either wrestling or in foot racing, they were well matched. Sugar and preserves were not only put out of reach, but under lock and key from this prodigy. There were a few peach trees off in a small orchard that had been planted by a former agent, and just beginning to bear. Joe could be found at most any time driving a sharp, close trade with the white-enveloped natives, giving a few hard, knotty things, in exchange for small beaded knife scabbards, and other pieces of their handiwork. He was shrewd, but full of principle. He could coin money out of the sunshine, and tan riches from the fur of the gopher.

Down in a little sandy stretch in one corner of the new garden venture, a careful hand had planted some "watermelon seed," turning their eyes as they were sowed, in the way they were expected to sprout. Joe, was the first to inform me that the dry earth had cracked around each hill, and as the vines began to walk, and then run, he intelligently pointed out to me the difference between the rattlesnake, and spotted kind. He rolled his eyes with joy, and smiled, and his mouth watered exceedingly, when he discovered the first fuzzy melon. From the time the embryo emblem of sweetness appeared, I had an indistinct feeling that there was a constant sound of "plug-thung, ploomp-thoomp,' going on off in the distance. That patch was watched early and late, for heavy losses might be incurred from insect marauders; the weeds would multiply and flourish if a constant warfare was not waged against the nuisance, so a sharp hoe, with much elbow-exercise, were the weapons employed, while liberal rations of Paris green, and other insecticides, were used on every leaf. At last when the warm sun and the wet rain finished their work, and the gardener followed the pea-vine-path to the marked corner that was regarded sacred, his longing and melting gaze turned into one of ferocious anger, as he discovered, over in the fence shade, the remains of several banquets, where the young darky, and the crows, had feasted, with naught but crushed plants to tell of the calamity. The wind sighed among the cottonwood trees with genuine sorrow, and over this last sad scene I draw the veil of charity.

Who loved better to gather life's roses than to encounter its thorns, preferring carnal enjoyments to the preference of a penance, or the keeping of a fast. Unconscious of all life's cares and duties, always cheerful and bright, a picture of health and happiness, glad to be alive, and getting amusement out of every thing he come across, quick to give or take a joke, stopping in the hurry of some important thing he had been told to play "good-by, my honey, she's gone," with always a miscellaneous array of articles in his trousers' pockets that gladden the heart of a boy, even to a rabbit's foot from the traditional "varmint" that was killed in a country graveyard at midnight, during the dark of the moon, on Friday, the 13th of the month, by a cross-eyed, left-handed, bow-legged nigger, riding a white horse. Tying tin-cans to the tails of vagrant dogs, or June-bugs around their ears to buzz, throwing the Indians' sling-shot, or whipping their odd tops, he was a wholesome thing to have around the house, althogh he made the cook's existence a burden, Long may "Joe" live, and may his tribe increase, and his shadow never grow less!

No Christian is more devoted to his religion than the wild Indian to his form of worship. Like all primitive people extremely superstitious, his faith is mingled and interwoven with every phase of his life. He believes in two spirits, the "Good Spirit," that brings success in his undertakings, whether for war or pleasure, and the "Bad Spirit," his enemy, that causes pain, suffering and disaster. He believes this for some inscrutable reason of his own which he does not undertake to divine. He believes in another life after death, but the power of the gods do not extend beyond the things of this world. Whatever the actual deeds done in the flesh the Indian when dead goes at once to the "happy hunting-ground," with two exceptions. An Indian that has been scalped can never enter the kingdom of Heaven. He believes the soul escapes from the body by the mouth, which at the moment of dissolution it opens to allow a free passage, and should he die by hanging, the soul could never leave the body, but would always remain there. The "happy-hunting-ground," of the Indian is a future life where he expects a heaven of comfort, and bliss, where the soul lives in endless joy, an eternity of beautiful land covered with buffalo. He believes he will be happy there, perfectly happy, the great unknown seems to have no terrors for him. This comfortable state of things arises from the fact that their creed does not call upon them to endorse the existence of a place where retribution is worked out. They treasure the fancy that "red clouds of the sunset" are made from the dust raised by the merry dancing of departed forms. The word "medicine" is of universal application. Everything that is lucky, or supposed to find pleasure from the Good Spirit, is "good medicine." Everything the reverse is "bad medicine." Different ingredients, which are kept sacredly secret, are tied in small pieces of buckskin, or calico, and known to be "good medicine. You find little bags of it in the hair of the braves, around the necks of the women, and children, and you see little knots of it all over the baby cribs. No Indian will take a hunt, or even a short journey, without first making "medicine." If good, he goes off, feeling happy; if bad, he remains at home.

The Indian goes to the other world just as he lives here, but he expects to have all the game he can kill and eat, and scalp all his enemies. He believes that every one remains at exactly the age at which he enters the new life. Old women, young ones, babies, braves, as they die so shall they remain to all eternity. The blind and maimed ones of their number grope their way through time to come. He believes that if he is killed in the dark he will forever dwell in darkness. It is said there is little danger to be feared from hostile Indians on a dark night. If a night-attack is made it is by moonlight. It is beyond the power of words to describe the superstition of these ignorant savages. If a death occur inside of their dwelling, all the paraphernalia that goes to make Indian wealth, or Indian comfort, is destroyed or consigned to the flames. When they find one of their number going to die they carry him outside of the lodge, so they will not be compelled to destroy their homes, which would be necessary if the spirit left the body inside of the enclosure. Coffee, flour, sugar, guns, and equipments, blankets, cooking utensils, must be carried into the next world, that they may want for nothing on their journey to the promised land. With a faith that was remarkable, the power of their God was relied upon to compass the confusion of the devil, and all his myriads of imps, but at the same time, they themselves found sustenance for the departed soul on its long and lonely trip. The number of ponies killed at a death depends upon the wealth of the individual or family. One of these bronchos is shot or strangled across the grave, that the deceased may mount the spirit of the animal, and the quicker make his journey to the promised land; and it is said that, formerly, some of the northern tribes killed a squaw at the same time that she might follow to wait on him when he got there.

There was a cemetery over on a beautifully sloping grass mound a mile from the Post, where the graves were covered with a great quantity of useful and curious articles, consisting of trinkets and Indian finery, while the recurring blossoms of spring-time were their only epitaphs. Driving over the prairie one bright sunshiny day, we spied a cluster of black-jack trees, that we thought would furnish us a shade for our lunch. As we drew near we found it to be the final resting-place of several Indian bodies. Poles were used as a platform, secured among the branches; sticks and grass were over this scaffolding, then buffalo robes and blankets were folded over this. The corpses were wrapped in sheets and laid on this bed, firmly bound together by raw-hide, and rope, while, scattered over the ground beneath were beads, pieces of broken plates, a tin cup, and many other miscellaneous articles that had dropped from this curious tomb of the dead. To add an element of weird horror to this picture, one felt that these grotesque shapes might come to life and hold hideous carnival around about, and the wings of the spirits of the air were felt, while the elaborate care taken to protect the skeleton forms looked like a thing linked to mystery.

The spot seemed indeed a strange abode for those who were called to "rest from their labors," as well as grewsome for the living to indulge in silent meditation. The trees seemed to live and flourish, while the victims of the great destroyer slept beneath their branches, chanting endless chants above their graves, and destructive owl and fleeting bird held silent communion with their spirits in these melancholy shades. The gloom and silence impressed one with picturesque wildness, as a something like awe is always experienced in the presence of death.

CHAPTER XVI.

WHAT could have been more delightful, or better able to dissipate the anxious cares of life, than the enjoyment of sky, air, and earth, and the picturesque novelty spread about broadcast. After we had swallowed our supper-dinner, and rested a little, we would take our carriage, a vehicle of comparatively light weight, being very slender in all its proportions, and calculated to be drawn at a very high rate of speed by our horses, that were tremendously high-stepping, beautifully-graceful equines, and go dashing along over the fine prairie roads, fairly annihilating space. On these rides I was always in a high state of glee, arising from the exhilarating effects of rapid motion.

Directing our course south, we would spin around the government town, often passing through the thoroughfares, and by-ways, to make a call at quaint prairie habitations, for a visit to the different lodges gave a thorough study and minute knowledge of Indian life, an interest for me that never flagged, for every camp had its own distinguishing peculiarities, rendering it unlike any of the others, and the true pulse of the country could be accurately told in these abiding-places.

As we approached and were discovered, we were always assailed by an array of as homely wretches as ever wore dogskin : spotted dogs, black dogs, yellow dogs, and all the neighbors, cousins, and kinfolk dogs, running from the tepees on every side, swarming around, jumping, barking, and snapping at us. It was the strangest phase of life one can imagine. We were generally welcomed by friendly Indians with a cordiality of grunts, and their greeting of "How," while the wilder element, glowering, would cast venomous glances at us, and appear perfectly oblivious to our presence, at first looking at us with that sullen species of resentful curiosity which dogs bestow on other dogs to whom they have never been introduced.

Children clad in little but their slick and shining skin, with which nature provided them, were almost as numerous as scraggy dogs. The boys were never without their weapons of pleasure, or game. You could habitually see them running along a short distance from the tepees, shooting field birds, rabbits, gophers, and ground-squirrels. They had a most fascinating way of spinning their tops. They would cut three or four buckskin strings, ingeniously bind them with sinew to a small smooth stick a foot and a half long, wrap the ends around a wood top similar to the white child's to start it, and then keep it popping and going by whipping it over the hard ground.

A plaything of the young Cheyenne boy is the miniature bow and arrow, which are changed for large ones as his strength increases, until by the time he can manage a man's weapon he is perfect in its use. He is bred on a horse's back, being put there before his legs can reach half way down the animal's side, where he soon becomes at home. The little girls are fond of dolls, which the squaws make of buckskin and dress artistically, with considerable skill and taste, while their playhouses are miniature tepees, where they take as much pleasure in play as white girls. These are literally the joys and toys of Indian childhood.

We would find leather-faced squaws variously occupied in all the domestic drudgeries of the camp, while perhaps an old man that had ceased to count the lapse of time, almost nude, with nothing but a clout to hide his nakedness, a shrunken, mummy-like body and face, the loose red skin of which was drawn into a variety of fanciful puckerings would come tottering up to the carriage, leaving perhaps a companion employed feathering his steel-pointed arrow. We were told it was these old men that used to poison their weapons. They would take a rattlesnake, tie it down and irritate it, in consequence of which it would strike at any object thrust at it. They used liver as the best absorbent, and they say the effectiveness of these sharp-pointed heads prepared by repeatedly plunging the arrow into the liver, and drying it, will be remembered by those who traversed the prairies a half century ago.

Tawny forms glided from one tepee to another or reclined around in groups. They displayed a new phase of Indian character, bestowing an insight into the domestic amusements which were popular at their own firesides. They engaged in games, and puzzles, with strings, and some of their inventions in this line were quite curious.

Perhaps we would find spread on the ground a bright red blanket or shawl, and a group of young Cheyenne women squatted around gambling. Some of these squaws had a claim to be considered good looking although a later, and a calmer day-collecting evidence, has concluded that Minnehaha was a myth, and the poet's story of soft, swinging beauty a fake, for the Indian maiden immortalized by Cooper, is conspicuous, if not by her absence, at least by her rarity.

A pair of moccasins, a piece of calico, a pound of coffee, and all other conceivable articles would be put up for their games of chance. The "plum-stone" was the most common one played, especially among the Arrapahoe women. Wild plum stones are rubbed, and scraped until they are flat, and white bones are cut, and shaped, and used the same way. The faces of these dice are marked with various hieroglyphics that resemble Chinese tea-caddy characters, while others are left plain. A small, round, woven basket, brightened with yellow ochre, was used for shaking the dice, when they were thrown on the blanket, between the players. Life was too short, and the system of counting too curious, for me to come to any distinct understanding as to the marks and blanks of this game, although I often afforded much merriment in demonstrating to a wild party my way of winning.

Another intricate game the Cheyennes are passionately fond of playing is the "bear foot." The bones of a bear-foot are polished and strung on sinew, a long steel needle of five or six inches is fastened at one end. There are sixteen holes in each bone. Throwing them forward a thrust is made with the needle to catch some of the holes in the bones, any number may play, each taking his turn.

Fifty, or seventy-five of the "Kiowa and Comanche" tribes, whose reservation was south of the "Cheyenne and Arrapahoes'," came to visit their neighbors for a week of general frolic. This jollification consists in trading ponies, dancing, feasting, and gambling. I was so anxious to pay a visit to these people I could hardly wait for them to get settled. We found a long, straight line of "small wall-tents" with the fronts opened, and while all groups and scenes were familiar ones, and strikingly true to the wild nature of all plains Indians, there were revelations which investigations brought to light that were astonishing. Great bustle and confusion was going on for the young bucks and maidens had no time to spare, as they were due at the "green-bough

"Cloud Chief," a brave Cheyenne warrior, a man of great endowments.

feast" at eight, and it was now six. An art current flowed out to us, and so engrossed were they as they sat following patiently the delicate tracery of some diabolical design giving little serious or anxious apprehension to our presence, that they allowed us, the uninitiated, to see them daub color on their faces that lay bare much of the mysteries of their tribe. They evidently wanted to win in competition with work done by their neighbors, who were acknowledged masters of color, and to us it certainly afforded a picturesque exhibition, as it was a subject of deep interest to watch these people, where generation after generation they had been educated to appreciate what we would call facial blemishes. The surroundings seemed to be an inspiration, for the excellent work of the kind was certainly in evidence, but although we saw how it was done, we were, in the main, profoundly ignorant of how it was effected.

These Comanches were fully equipped with all the beautifiers known to savagery. Buffalo, panther, wildcat, otter, and other rugs, were spread around, while all were busy in their barbaric preparations. Our attention was particularly attracted to a dark, glossy-haired, Egyptian-featured young squaw, who in an especially fetching gown of buckskin and shells, sat holding a tiny round mirror, an inch or two in diameter, looking at the master stroke of a bright line brought out, that was enough to drive an Arrapahoe mad with envy, or make the most conscientious Cheyenne brave long to exchange his wide prairie acres for a treacherous home on the South Canadian. There was a certain pleasing, superior individuality about this girl, with rather an attractive personality, she evidently having imparted to their nondescript and often ugly costume, her distinctive and transforming touch. In her person she was lithe, and graceful as a panther, an expressive eye, and a mouth indicating refinement and vigorous character, uncommon in her race. Her "paint stick" whittled to a point she carried in a beautifully beaded case with long dangling pendants attached to her belt. In "pigeon-holed" recesses were stowed the different kinds of paints, and looking at them it was easy to see how the hideous conceptions of the artist could grow under the fingers of the artisan, for shades of all tints were side by side with that whose yellow glow rivaled the most brilliant colors of red, green, blue, amber, and vermilion. After a few criss-cross marks on one cheek, she would stop, as she wanted something original, nothing common, and of course not having quite arrived at a conclusion as to the style in which her own particular face should be decorated, it became necessary to carefully study the effect. When finished, this marvelous get-up of mixtures left nothing to suggest, for the dusky queen was certainly a show in full flower, while, her pre-eminent talent must have rendered her services of the greatest value to others less gifted. My bitterest regret was that I could not follow through the evening's festivities to listen to the universal language of love and happiness, a language understood the world over, to note the rivalry of the Cheyenne maiden, and watch the gallants wage fierce conflict over the ardent wooing of this proud, sensuous beauty of her race, who displayed such remarkable traits in sustaining the "Hiawathian legion."

"The surveyors are gwine to lay off a farm for 'Cloud-Chief' to-day," said black "Abe" one morning. No sooner had the man rendered this piece of intelligence than I was ready to go. Out in the brilliant sunshine, blue distances, pure air, and general freedom not more than two hundreds rods from the big government Commissary building, twenty acres of beautiful prairieland was selected as a home for one of the bravest Cheyenne warriors of the tribe, one who was first to listen to progressive ideas, and willing to endanger his life from the wild element, to prove to the "Great father at Washington" that he was on the "white man's road." He was a man of great endowments, clearly understood the power of the white man, and distinctly foresaw the peril the Indian would incur by waging war against adversaries so formidable. I had much pleasure, and believed it an honor when I made a "heathen exhibition" of myself by begging to be allowed to hold the bleached skull of an unknown species of the animal kingdom in position at one spot of this square ground, while directions were going on, and the carriage driven to another point where perhaps stuck the uncanny-wide-spreading horns of an ox to mark another corner. In a short time the government farmer had the post-holes dug, the posts set, the wire unwound and tacked, and soon the white tepee home was in the center of a tract of plowed ground.

"Cloud-Chief" was in a melancholy state of indecision, but, after a bewildering complexity, he concluded if he had really become a cut-and-dried corn-planter, and would have to walk over civilized ridges, instead of the wide expanse of luxuriant grass he had tramped with silent tread for the past decade, threading his way uninterruptedly save by the cry of the wild beast in his lair, he would have to change the character of his foot-gear, and discard the soft, beaded moccasin. We called on him one evening at his home, and it was some time before he made his appearance, at last, with his knight-errantry stride, fine statesmanlike qualities in the extraordinary combination of white sheet and cavalry boots, he came to meet us. Like a sailor on a horse, his awkwardness presented a most ludicrous effect. He had evidently kept us waiting to make a martyr of himself, for our edification. With rapid signs he told how much difficulty he was having in accustoming himself to the unwieldly cumbersome leathers.

A volume could be written on Indian agriculture, but memory is of the past, yet when Darlington absorbs the vim, energy, and push of Oklahoma, and when the sunflowers that are blooming, and the wild-hemp that is growing, and the buffalo-grass that mats around his door, and the tall-pole that stands ready to hoist a bright pennant to appraise the tribe of the ghost-dance, or some other meeting is displaced, "Cloud-Chief" can lay off his twenty acres into corner lots, and, with one great financial swoop, realize a thousand dollars a front foot, for he is still progressing and now makes his appearance in a full dress military coat, a present to him from one at the Post Although he retains his sheet for ordinary purposes, through habit on all special occasions, he dresses in the full, distinguishing insignia of a staff officer's rank, which adds to his commanding appearance, for he is a magnificent specimen, over six feet in height, and carries his responsible charge with that dignity which is perhaps more fully developed in the red man than in any other uncivilized tribe.

Captain. L——, one of the best known and most popular officers of the army, was detailed by the War Department to take charge and look after the welfare of these Indians, as well as to keep them under subjection. "Cloud-Chief" elaborated and adorned his scalp-lock with a profusion of otter fur, to correspond with his brass-buttoned, bedizened uniform that was weighted with the shoulder-straps of a colonel, and walked into the Agency office to call on the "Big-Soldier-Chief-from-Washington." Looking up and seeing his visitor wore straps that outranked his own, Captain L—— stood up, saluted, and after a most soldierly greeting, remarked that he was ready to be relieved, offering at once to resign to this outranking officer, explaining that he did not care to have his corps of employes become confused as to which should give orders and which should be obeyed.

Sometimes when the sun was not up high enough to make it oppressive, or it had gone suddenly down in a blaze of glory, as that orb had a habit of doing in these parts, even when hostile uprising and the signs of disturbance were everywhere manifest, we would drive down, or up, the high-road, broad and level as a garden path, and strike in numerous lanes of tepees, and then as the sun declined, go home again by some new avenue of strangeness. With an exhilaration of spirits like that following the inhalation of laughing gas, we passed one evening a settlement of tepees off to themselves, when small but portentous clouds appeared, containing the latent elements of a future tempest, which burst from a quarter when the sky appeared most serene. I thought I noticed several Indian bucks staring strangely as we slowly and inquiringly drove along. Knowing the enemy held the ground right up to the government fence, I looked away just across the road, and caught the flash of steel. It was the sun striking on a gun-barrel in the hands of one of the savages, who looked menacingly at us, and doggedly stood pointing the dangerous thing right at us. The dogs set up a barking as if to call our attention, while a ground squirrel came out of his hole in the ground and sat on the pile of fresh earth, and whisked his tail, and looked frightened.

I heard the hum of the ball, but it might have been the drone of a horse-fly. I turned to look and for a moment the sight dumfounded me. It was evidently a kind of reconnoissance, a feeler as it were, to find our weak spot. They were successful in finding mine, for a full battery of artillery playing grape and canister on us could not have checked the momentum in which I begged to run. It was policy they told me to look unconcerned, and the spirited horses were reined up into a slow walk. I was told to be brave, for we were in a country that required all the E-pluribus-unum-beatitudes to be rolled into one, while nothing like the sensations I experienced was ever before heard of, since the stars sang together, and nothing like it will ever be felt again as long as the grass grows and water runs.

CHAPTER XVII.

The western sky, a deep blue sky, that Indian Territory sky, whose cerulean depths the eye seemed almost to fathom, yet only to realize that they were illimitable, was all aglow with flame-colored clouds, fading away to the east into crimson, orange, yellow, and bluish gray, when we happened, one evening, to come upon a man and woman and their outfit, consisting of little more than a wagon and a team of horses. The latter as weather-beaten and dilapidated a pair of quadrupeds as ever cheated the bone-yard out of its dues. They had converted their wagon into a temporary home.

Close to the rear wheel stood the "lord of the manor," a tall, broad-shouldered, sunburnt man, with long, shaggy hair falling from beneath his wide-rimmed hat, and a month's beard on his dusty face, dressed in coarse trousers, a red silk handerchief around his waist, while he wore a dark blue cotton shirt. A damp and mildewed air pervaded him, and he was evidently a good subject for the vigilance committee to look after. The woman was perhaps thirty-five, square and thin, with sallow face, strong jaws, and large dark eyes. She wore an old-fashioned, coal-scuttle bonnet, made of strips of paste-board with calico, having a cape to shield the neck and shoulders. She had that torpid, listless manner which is inseparable from those who have been the victims of chills and fever. "Ye-e-es," she said to me with a long drawl in reply to a question, while the fingers of one hand wandered feebly about her chin, and face as if seeking for thought and resolution of purpose, which had forsaken it if it had ever been there. "Ye-e-es, thar has bin a deal of fever and agur whar we come from. Nigh all the country has bin down with it." Her energies and theories on the problem of human affairs had apparently oozed out, but she looked as if she might still have faith enough left to plant potatoes when the moon was full and the south wind blew. The forlorn appearance of both entitled them to some sympathy, for a study of their unfortunate character revealed a life of sad failure, and it was but human to offer assistance which they gladly accepted, for they had traveled from Texas to Hepsibub, swallowed up in that dim line which hovers between barbarism and civilization, and had at last reached the place where nature revelled in all its primitive grandeur of trackless and unbroken prairie. They were on their way to some visionary spot which they long ago idealized as capable of answering their life's demands, but which they never yet had been able to find; so they were trudging on toward an ever-receding goal.

One drizzly autumn morning, a few weeks after this meeting, I saw Joe bringing around the veranda a gaunt, emaciated creature, whose faded and weather-worn clothes spoke of an outdoor life. If the woman had ever been blessed with maiden beauty, it had entirely succumbed to the hard trials of wedded life. She had wrapped herself up against the elements, as though her existence had taught her to expect from all things the bitterest that might be.

"Wal, we're goin' to light out for Texas," was her greeting, "and you've bin so powerful kind to us, Bill and me was talkin' it over, and as we thought it wouldn't come amiss, as I 'lowed you had so many curious things hangin' 'round your house, and I reck'ned they was some comfort to you, as seein' I didn't know nothin' 'bout any of 'em, may be our diamond-back rattles would be out of the every-day run, for you could string 'em, or stick 'em with glew on a box-top, and hang 'em up somewheres."

The thick sky lifted, and was streaked with muddy red up to the zenith, and the wind lulled out of its impatient gusts into a cold, and penetrating damp, as the woman busily opening a package came toward me, dramatically exclaiming.

"Ma'am, you can't understand the painful and thrillin' associations, and the agonies of mem'ry these treasures bring to min'," and she pressed one large bony hand on that portion of her tall person for which her dressmaker deserved the greatest credit. She evidently possessed the pre-eminent gift of speech, I thought, as the stream of words so copiously poured forth on such an unimaginable topic. She was certainly not grudgingly endowed with powers of talk.

"O, ma'am, if you but knowed my history. Heaven forbid that I should in life disclose a sad story which will be found writ on my soul when this pore body is laid in the dust."

Then she retired into herself and sighed heavily, and dropping her head on one side fell into a mournful reverie. Joe, with a sweep of both hands worthy of a windmill in full motion, solemnly walked off with measured step, giving a tragic air to the scene, while his white-orbed eyes seemed to regard the effect with great satisfaction as I caught a few words of his song about "The time of year when the 'possum was flourishing in all his glory and the tater was sappy, and the combination was superb."

Now I never could endure mysteries, and I wondered what all this had to do with "diamond back rattles." Soon regaining courage she said,

"Wal, a few years ago down in Tennessee ever livin' creetur in Knocks County near "Beaver Creek" knowed Jane Simpson. I laid claim to good looks, and I was sech a fine dresser and had so many fineries and fancy trimmin's, they called me the "silk-rustler," for I jest rustled, and with my ribbons and laces, could jest take the shine off 'n any of 'em, and I was kinder uppish in my ways too."

She took off her bonnet, and turned her back suddenly as if she had caught some passing shadow at the window, then leaning forward glancing about her first as though the walls had ears, and I was wishing they had, and that Joe, or some feather-bedecked warrior, would appear for protection.

"I have suffered," she continued, throwing a self-pitying emphasis on the last word, depriving her confidence of all possibility of giving offense by the acknowledgment it contained of her great grief.

"I washed, cooked, plowed, dug, foddered the cattle by myself, and tried to make Bill a man, for he was allus rakish, and goin' 'round like a barn-yard cock crowin' after the hen had laid the egg, but he got cobwebs in his brains, and the thing he went off with had a nateral hankerin' after flippery and show, for she was a weak, mawkish, simperin' creetur, doin' nothin' but sittin' by the winder readin' dog-eared books of poetry, and yellow-back stuff."

The veins in her throat rose and swelled, her hands clinched, but the face remained still and firm.

"I had no hope, I had bin so long in the dark," she went on, "that daylight blinded me, nothin' to love, no hope, no friends, my life was holler, and the hot ashes burned and smouldered in my breast. I begged Bill to behave like a decent man, and pay his reckonin' like an honest one. Wal' his devilment didn't last long, for the gal shook 'im and he come back, but he 'pears mightily broke up."

Here was a tragedy which in every generation has been repeated. Years of wedded life with these simple people had approached at times the crescendo of domestic bliss, when all at once, "eyes" filled with the sheet-lightning of coquetry and fascination, with a graceful and coy form that made it plain that affections were attainable, had smote Bill's heart as a cyclone smites a wheat-field, and he concluded to make a fool of himself. Little did this same Bill, like Napoleon, think, when he was making a sacrifice of all the happiness which he had known in the world that the uncertainty for which it was relinquished would fade away ere a few months had run their course. What strange destinies do men carve out for themselves! What sacrifices are they ever making of felicity, and of real good in the pursuit of some phantom which is sure to elude their grasp! How many Edens have been forfeited by madness, and by folly since the first pair were expelled from Paradise! After the ultimate result of Bill's past system of high pressure, exhaustive investigation, and untiring industry, in unworthy research, reaction had evidently swept him back into the worst condition of unhappy tolerance of life. He had required constant stimulants to his vanity and self-love, and was not yet surfeited with the wine and honey of his former ambitious achievements, and thus disappointed, he had sat down with folded hands and a vicious brain, weakly unconscious alike of his degenerate condition. This long-continued exertion had brought on exhaustion, and the pendulum had swung back so far as to leave him in a state bordering on barbarism, for his forbidden sweets had proved bitter, and the new life failed to displace the old. The wretched woman who had made the ruin took her load of dishonor with her, and left the guilty husband, who knocked timidly at the door of his deserted home, and begged for pardon, for he knew

"A woman's heart was a curious thing,
That you might bruise, and break, and roughly fling
The bauble away as a useless thing,
But God made them that way."

With no faith left in anything but the memory of her murdered love, worn out with the struggles of her married life, asking only for rest, and ignorant where to find it, feeding her soul upon the Dead Sea's fruit of ashes, when it starved for nourishment and grew parched with thirst, the woman opened the box she held in her hand, and looked longingly at the contents, throwing me into a maze of wonder and conjecture. While, judging from Bill's mundane matter-of-fact character as I remembered it, he was the last man I would suspect of having been at any time of his life a brutal and habitual victim to the tender passion, but I had courage to give her hope, in saying I was certain her life would not always go on in this fated coldness, and that I hoped her fate would float into long golden days that would be inexpressibly peaceful and quiet, and lead far away from the gloom of the past years, all the time expecting zip-coon, or some other monster, to pop up from under the cover she held.

"I've had some of these keepsakes a mighty long time, back when Bill and me was young," she said. "We would kill these 'diamonds' everywheres and every place. I killed as many as he did on the little farm in Arkansas, where we moved from Tennessee. We would find 'em under the house, in the swamps, and in the brush, and when we roved 'round Texas, they was so thick thar' they cut the grass 'round the wagon. We've allus put 'em away and saved 'em."

I was reduced to a state of mental amazement, when she at last poured out three dozen rattlesnake rattles, of all shapes, sizes, and forms. She pointed out a "button" that represented a snakeship's life of a year.

"Thar's an awful buzz of a rattle," she exclaimed, as she held up with pride twenty joints that told of the creeping reptile's age of as many years, while I certainly agreed with her that it must have been a choice specimen.

"We thought Bill had his death-bite when that struck 'im, for in a shorter time than it takes to tell it he was a sight to behold. He was pitchin' hay, and he felt something like a hen peck 'im, but it wasn't deep, and we pulled 'im out, for the whiskey in 'im helped do it and we jest kept pourin' it in."

As the atmosphere cleared, and the low descending sun glorified the western sky, and ere the star daisies had dotted the metadows of the night, this poor woman wrapped her mantle of moody reflections, together with my thanks, around her, and I reckon went South to replenish her stock-in-trade, where she will probably continue to mourn her shattered hopes until she fills a little plot in a weedy graveyard back down in Texas; where in memory to her I trust the unfaithful companion in life repented in the lines of the poets, suggestive words—

> "If you die I wish you could be laid by me,
> And lying together in silence perhaps we will agree.
> And if ever we meet in Heaven I would not think it queer,
> If we love each other better because we quarreled here."

I still look upon the array of "diamond backs" with kindly eye, as the cherished mementos of the eventful past.

When we returned from our drives we would find the wide cool porch wonderfully enticing after a warm summer day, and while it was not all a tale of tranquillity with us, this was a place to dream in, a place to feel gladness and sorrow, joy and sadness, happiness, and something that is all this mingled, for "Life is a train of moods, like a string of beads, and as we pass through them they prove to be many-colored lenses which paint the world their hue, and each shows what lies in its focus." When the broad face of the moon rose from the bosom of the river, and threw a long line of light across the rippling waves toward us, we would listen to the current ever rushing onward, or hear an occasional splash from some one driving their trusty horses across the ford, or again the sound of voices from a party around the bend would come to us as they dived and swam, floated and plunged. It was a world of sweet and bitter, mixed with the din of drums, and when the stars so radiant and bright, twinkled with sorrow, and the soul was struggling with misfits and disappointments, it could always find rest beneath this sheltered roof.

The religious singings, the dismal and doleful wails of the mourners, are the same half guttural sounds that

PIZEN.

My Seamy-faced friend, a Cheyenne centenarian, one hundred and ten years old.

are heard at the scalp-dance. These people express their grief by torturing themselves, by stripping and going into their 'sweat houses" cutting deep gashes in different parts of their bodies, while they go walking around for days relieving themselves of the most frightful moans and groans. They have mourners that we would call "hired" for the occasion. The services of a number of old squaws are secured (when a poor Indian without friends leaves this vale of woe) to wail and howl, and the ones that perform this ceremony certainly understand their calling. They may have light hearts and a sunny disposition, but, having perfect control over their emotions, they can shed tears, shriek, and wring their hands at a funeral, until I wondered why the rest of the tribe did not feel like committing suicide in a fit of despondency, or go stark mad. When the grand finale came at the grave, and the pony and horses were killed, they could tear their hair and wail, and throw in more tears than the contract called for sustaining the dignity of bereavement. Of course the fee of beef and feathers, depended on the kind of lamentations required.

One day I saw a half-dozen of these old howlers shuffling awkwardly by the house, filling the air with half-nasal, dismal sounds, and I asked for a hurried meaning. I was told that they were grieving for the poor that had died. Their hair was cut short, an act which still further symbolized their grief. The howls of the men mingled with the shrieks of the women, taking up the death-chant, weird, wild, uncanny, hopeless, and doleful. For hours the crooning of the old women could be heard as they sat facing the sun. I saw strange-looking mounds in front of many of the tepees, and on investigating found they were their "sweat houses." They are supposed to be effectual in sickness, and a place of penance and suffering, a refuge for the bereaved to mourn in steam-heat for their lost ones. They are small structures, three or four feet high, shaped like a bake-oven, a frame of reeds, or stone covered with skins and old cloth. A fire is built inside; when a proper degree of heat is obtained the coals are raked out, and divesting himself of all clothing, the Indian takes an old blanket, and saturating it thoroughly in water, spreads it out on the stones, when the instant the wet flannel touches the hot rocks nothing is visible but clouds of steam pouring out of the hole, and as he is stripped naked he crawls in. After remaining on the warm seat until each pore is open into a trickling fountain of exhaustion, and he looks like "resolving into silent dew," these reeking victims are dragged off, and plunged into water, when, if he is able to stand, he will wade in until the water is up to his knees, when in he rolls, or plunges. In an instant he is up again, wildly waving his arms, and beating his chest, and then he plunges in again, repeatedly, until he has disappeared several times under the water.

In the front of these little holes there is a dirt mound, on a stick in the center of which hangs a bleached, ghastly-looking buffalo skull, a spiritual significance and meaning, while this animal has vanished from earth the slain phantom spirit hovers over the scene to appease the "bad God." One can forgive the innocent superstition that prompts all ages, both sexes, the infirm, the diseased, and the young to share this self-baptism. The miraculous curing properties of this heroic treatment are not always efficacious. In cases of measles and small-pox, the patient generally goes to the "sweat house," and the "happy hunting-ground" at the same time.

"Old Pizen," the seamy-faced centenarian of the Cheyennes, and myself were on the most friendly terms. She was said to be one hundred and ten years old, and her appearance seemed to bear out that statement. Her beauty was not the curve of an eyelash, or, the model of a shell-like ear, but if her prayers could have won blessings, I would have been wealthy in mercies. She was a small creature, with wild, black, beady eyes, a mop of grayish hair, and a long chin. Hideous smiles rippled over her wrinkled features. Her emaciated cheeks, covered with skin that resembled yellow parchment, were traced with crows' feet and wrinkles, until one almost fancied that she had been on earth since the days of ancient Egypt, at any rate, she had certainly out-lived the ordinary lifetime of her species. Her appeals to me for "chuck-a-way" were always made with a copious flow of tears, punctured with boisterous sobs; so loud did she often become in her lachrymose wail, that, on one or two occasions, I found it necessary to admonish her to be more mild in her supplications, for fear of disturbing the lurking coyotes.

This decrepit old creature was one of the principal public mourners, and she entered enthusiastically into the spirit of her incantations, swaying as they swelled, and then falling with her uplifted hands and eyes as if to stay the flight of some spirit. Her actions were wild and rude, expressive as wild, powerful as rude. A written transcript of her extraordinary performances would be tame. She seemed to be an internal convulsion, her throat was never hoarse from this howl of despair. These creatures would join forces, and wander madly around, wailing in the same key, keeping up a discordant sound, while no sooner had the last lamentation died away in the distance, than a fresh wail was lifted up, and carried through the air. You were at a loss to understand whether their appeal was the invocation of the waters of life everlasting, or of death and destruction. As the weird sound was spirally ascending, and when as high as the finishing touch that makes perfect, the whole started out across the waste, and passed on, you wondered they did not snap, and fall to the earth in fragments, as they would writhe in space. Certainly they omitted nothing on these occasions that might charm some kind of a spirit. They were supposed to be chanting the requiem for the dead, but those who had to listen to them came near breaking the commandments of the living. When they stopped, or the sound died of its own exhaustion, it was the most "restfullest" kind of rest, for the fiercest and savagest of all wild creatures is the tongue. These women had taken an active part in all the Cheyenne and Arrapahoe hostilities, following the men and urging them on with taunts and jeers, if they showed signs of weakening, for they could wield weapons with deadly dexterity.

A low moaning and groaning sound was wafted through my window one day as a deep sigh of the wind in some remote depth, when I stepped out on the veranda to find "Pizen," this antiquated weather-beaten specimen of humanity, in all fortitude, sitting in contemplation of the ruin that she had seemingly brought upon herself. She looked as if her world of hope and joy had become an abomination of desolation. I stared dumfounded, for I thought despair was sandwiched deep in the furrows of every lineament of her wrinkled countenance, but under the mask I discerned the workings of a human heart.

Such a sight almost threatened the destruction of my soul. Here was the venerable old savage, with her limbs, from her knees down, cut and slashed in a most revolting manner lying in the sun, exhausted from pain, and suffering the extremity of bodily torture. She still indulged in a low chant as weird as a witch's incantation. This was her religious faith, and she believed that this knife-cutting was an act most acceptable to her God. There is no room upon the list of this world's heroes for those who are great in goodness alone, and I am afraid my lowly annals are the only pages that the recital of her virtues will ever enrich. This inspiring incident, however, did not prevent her being, from a constitutional standpoint, just about as physically immoral as she could be.

My thoughts move more solemnly when I recall President Cleveland's forty-day proclamation, issued after sending the Lieutenant-General of the Armies of the United States, to investigate what was going on in our little world. The day which time can never efface—the advent of my departure. The old woman, five score and ten, grasped my hand with inexpressible anguish at what she thought the last parting. So great was the fascination of her grief, that I joined with her, and mingled tears on this lamentable occasion. For her wrinkled begrimed lips murmured supplications and benedictions in a quavering key that was sufficiently heart-rending as she bent double, and walked around haltingly, just as one would expect a hundred-and-ten-year-old mendicant to do, who had probably not tasted food for many hours. Great was the merriment when "Captain L—— of the 9th," discovered that this old crone, not blinded by her sorrow, had appropriated scissors and all other small articles of value in her reach, and had successfully escaped detection until too far gone to recover them.

I comforted myself in this seeming dishonesty that the souvenirs and mementos she had taken would assist her eyesight, and unlock the mysteries not yet revealed to her industrial sewing life, for she was noted for making the representative Indian dolls for the tribe. Out of buckskin, beads, and strauding, she constructed facsimiles of Cheyenne chiefs and maidens, that brought her two and three dollars apiece revenue."

CHAPTER XVIII.

EVERY year the Indians had their "sun-dances" to make medicine. The good or bad luck that befalls the tribe depends upon the result of these feasts. The Cheyennes often had three or four meetings during the season, and the Arrapahoes had the same, being careful not to appoint the same time. All Indians must be present by order of the "dog soldiers." If any are disposed to refuse to obey the summons, they are pounced upon by an overwhelming force of warriors. I was anxious to be present at one of these religious ceremonies. Everything betokened active preparations for the approaching celebration. The day set for starting I noticed the "white tepee towns" had vanished in the night, probably to get an early start, for the little pack ponies would haveto travel four or five miles to reach their destination. A spot is generally selected convenient to wood and water. We found the ride through the encampment interesting. The tepees were pitched on a high knoll, and an effort not altogether successful had been made to get them in a huge semicircle. They were near a narrow, rushing stream, with sandy caving banks, and muddy water, dashing headlong among thick groves of willows and young cottonwoods. The center lodge was an immense structure as large as a circus tent. This was decorated in dazzling colors, with streamers of flaming red, and brightest yellow. Great boughs of green foliage covered and ornamented ugly places. From the top of the ridgepole a barbaric image, one side painted white, the other black, was suspended hanging in the center. A circular space was roped off for the dancers, all the outer portion of the enclosure was for the spectators. We drew a little aside from the eddying throng to study at our leisure the details of the wonderful sight before us.

The camp was a busy scene; there were perhaps five thousand Indians, three thousand ponies, and two thousand dogs. Every tepee had its poles outside hung with stripped beef and entrails, drying in the sun. We stopped in front of one family gathering, and watched them cook their dinner. They were sitting outside under a small awning rudely thatched with leaves and branches and many other things that contributed to make a shade, while the whole was supported by undressed poles. There was a square hole in the ground, a bright fire burning inside, a skillet made by civilized hands set over this opening. A woman of the better class of Cheyennes wearing a calico slip of the gaudiest colors and patterns that an artistic decorator would describe as a symphony in green, with an astonishing display of bracelets and strings of beads, sat on the ground, a shawl folded on her lap doing duty as a bread-board, vigorously kneading a large piece of dough—a mixture of flour, grease, and water. The shawl looked clean, and when she had worked the dough into shape she laid it in the hot pan, and after it was cooked it looked quite palatable. We might have availed ourselves of an invitation to partake of this repast had we not seen the process of manufacture. A vessel of black rye-coffee, and a stew-pot, with chunks of stewed meat (perhaps dog), composed this frugal meal.

As we viewed the surroundings the curved lines of circular tents presented a very curious appearance. Some of the inmates were cooking, some lounging, some peeped listlessly forth at us in every imaginable, and unimaginable, variety of gimcracks and gew-gaws, in every possible and impossible description, while many of the dusky listeners, wrapped in their gaudy blankets, sat ferociously around the "magic circle." Ponies grazed and jostled each other. The dogs kept up a continuous howling, intensified from the pain inflicted upon them. The cruelty of the Indian is inborn and inbred, and it clings to him through life. As a boy, his special delight is the torture of every bird or animal he can get hold of alive. Here were dozens of poor, suffering dogs, bristling like porcupines with sharp arrows that had been shot into their bodies by these young fiendish devils, while they seemed to be in the extravagance of delight. The schools adjourned for the children to attend medicine. To keep them in during a season of one of these dances would have been an impossibility. It excited them so they had to be allowed to go; otherwise they would quietly have walked out regardless of permission.

It was like the sliding canvas of a painted panorama, every variety, and color, and length of gown, from the primitive costume of the shirt-tail to the flowing robes of the winding-sheet was visible. All were arrayed in gay holiday attire; what with the blue sky, the light, the breeze, the space began to seem unreal. As we sat experiencing this novel sensation, and wondering at the many inexhaustible surprises, a boy in a gaudy, heavily-beaded suit, rode by on a pony handsomely caparisoned with richly embroidered trappings. The animal was almost covered with bead-work and fringed buckskin. This riding costume, scintillating in the sunlight, was unique in its flashing beauty and barbaric elegance. This youth was evidently "a son of his father, a dapper little chief with a royal little pony." There were guards whose duty it was to see that the dancers were not interfered with, and to warn them that disgrace and death would follow any warrior who failed to appear. A mammoth drum sat on the ground on the outer circle, where many of the head-men crowded around beating it vigorously, while their howls reverberated in the heavy gloom, and sounded preternaturally loud, adding discordant music to the harrowing spectacle. They beat and pounded that drum with delicious joy while they bumped its head on either side its rim, until it vibrated and spun itself into a pitch of ear-splitting fury. A chorus of the most hideous old abject squaws screeched a shrill, death-curdling accompaniment. The place kept growing more and more weird, and I commenced to draw in long, silent breaths, with bewilderment too like awe to find easy shape in speech, when there appeared striding through the press seventy-five young, vicious, wild "specters," their huge bones seeming to start through their brown leathery skins. These men were to prove their power of endurance. They were all accompanied by the "medicine chief." They were nude, stripped to the breech-clout, their bodies painted in every conceivable color and style with symbols and hieroglyphics. The first that came by had bright yellow polka dots to his waist-line, while his legs were striped with vermilion. Another had his hands and feet painted dead-black, while his chest would have answered for a checker-board. Bright green stripes from the nose to the abdomen, with stripes on either side extending to the shoulders, ornamented one, while wavy lines upon the thighs, and half-circles of many colors on others and *ad libitum.* Around the neck of each hung a small whistle made from the bone of a turkey, and at the lower end was fastened a feather from a favorite bird.

I was dazed, but the performers took their places around the "ridge-pole," fixing their eyes on the suspended image, blowing their whistles shrilly and continuously, springing up and down in a monotonous way, their movements reminding one of a clumsily constructed automata. Their faces seemed to grow more inhuman, less and less friendly; and for three days and nights without sleep, food, or drink this must continue. After a time, keeping the eyes on one spot, and the expenditure of breath in unceasing whistling, causes many to totter, reel, and faint. If such a thing happens, the hero is carried out and cared for by the squaws until he revives. If the chief excuses him from further suffering, that law is such that no power may question. If the dancer's wealth is sufficient to insure the priest or bishop with a full larder for some time to come there is no hesitation in his according the request, thus using a priestly office to advance temporal interests.

One of the three dance-days is set apart for piercing the ears of the children. The "medicine man," who has at all times been busy with his unaccountable maneuvers, had a board covered with a buffalo-robe laid on the ground before him, and the squaw gave him her child. It was held on this improvised bed while its ears were barbarously cut and slashed. It was carried away bleeding, so that it was scarcely recognizable. The priest received one or more ponies for each child that he tortured. We knew a dozen children would have to go through this same suffering but the sight of one sufficed. We saw the most beautiful ponies, one after another, led inside of the lodge to be presented to "his high grace." Another wilder and stranger feature of this ceremony was that participating bucks pierced their breasts with knives, run long thongs of hickory wood whittled into shapes resembling that of a common meat skewer through the holes, suspended themselves by a rope to the top of the tepee, where they hung and danced, until their weight broke through the flesh. You could hear the hide pop as they would fall to the ground insensible and bleeding. I questioned to myself if it be really the abode of men in the flesh, or but a dream wherein spirits live and move and have their being. It was past belief how a human being could voluntarily endure such pain. If the dance progressed to the end of the three days without a death, the chiefs and warriors were happy, it has been "good medicine," the good Spirit has assured them of every success during the ensuing year. But if death result from the fasting and exposure, the camp becomes a pandemonium of mourning and "bad medicine."

We started over wild space toward our own comparatively quiet home, hoping that we had left chaos behind. As the sun set and deepening shadows of twilight gathered, and profound stillness settled upon us, there was a feeling of solemnity about the tortures these people inflicted upon themselves. We were impressed with the sincerity of their motives in worshiping the Unknown.

Certainly the manners and customs of this prairie life afforded novelties of thrilling interest. On the hills one could see herds of three or four hundred to a thousand ponies, lazily feeding, sometimes guarded, by a dozen superannuated squaws, then again grazing unattended. The toughness and strength of this little product of the plains can scarcely be exaggerated. Some were wickedly vicious, others tame and gentle, of all ages, from a colt to specimens of wonderful equine antiquity. White, spotted, black, red, fat in summer and lean in winter, assortments of these animals are an Indian's delight, for he is an arrant jockey, and understands all the tricks of horse-racing, not for a square and fair run, but for a trick race, and great pains are therefore taken in training. An Indian is a dashing horseman and daring rider. I saw a stout athletic young buck go tearing around the reservation on a wild pony. It was a puzzling, but apparently easy feat for him to ride bareback, and go at full speed with his body entirely concealed except an arm and a toe, at the same time shooting at an imaginary object from behind. He had braided the mane into a long loop in which he had thrust his arms, and thus he had free play.

I watched a skilled equestrian cowboy break one of these bronchos. His first trouble was in buckling a double-cinch California tree-saddle on him, for they say they are the only saddles that are made which a wild horse cannot buck over his head. After risking his life, he succeeded in getting on, gathering the reins up firmly. Then the question to me was how long would he remain there, for the beast had an expression of resentment and anger—as natural an expression to a horse as cuss-words to a man. Without a moment's warning, the wild animal was standing with its head low on the ground, front legs stiff, and his hind ones high in the air. He was bucking. He was bucking violently, and he kept up a running fire of bucks, but the big saddle did not budge, neither did the man.

A result that must successfully follow, for when a herd of cattle numbering thousands become frightened and go on a stampede, only those who have heard the thundering roar of one of these living cyclones, and seen the havoc and devastation caused by its passage, can have any full idea, or realize the importance of bringing man, horse, and saddle to a perfect standard of enduring excellence, for the cow-boy must dash in among the frantic foaming beasts, and while it is one thing to ride on the outside, it is another to be in among the tossing horns and plunging masses. By gallant work on the part of his pony, and security and strength of his horse-trappings, he sets off at headlong gallop to out-ride the living storm, turn the leaders, set the vast herd to what they call milling, and eventually bring it to a state of quiet.

A white man mounts on the left side of his horse, an Indian on the right. The women ride astride, mount on the right side, and are perfectly at home in their crude saddles. I have seen hundreds of ponies driven across the water at a time when the gurgling rush and the current of the river gleamed like running quicksilver, and it would seem swift enough to carry any living thing—man or horse—off its legs, when in a second they would come trotting out on the opposite shore as hardy and tough-looking as when they went in. When a strange pony is added to the herd, the rope around its neck is tied to the tail of one of the most domesticated little animals, and they soon get used to their new companion; for an Indian pony is a wanderer on the earth—he doesn't receive a particle of attention. In winter he is the most miserable object, his coat is long, rough, and shabby; cold and piercing winds throw him into a forlorn and downcast condition.

The pony is the Indian's inseparable companion. No mercy is shown the little beasts, they being rather light than heavy in build; and if a savage wants to take a trip miles away, he goes. If he is in a hurry, it does not take him long to go and return. Some of the feats performed by the plains pony seem almost impossible of belief when the conditions of distance and endurance are considered. General Miles is said to owe much of his success as an Indian campaigner to the able assistance and faithful loyalty of the cayuse pony. In a long race over the western (desert) plains made in 1860 one of these little animals successfully carried Uncle Sam's mail from Sacramento, Cal., to St. Joseph, Mo., a distance of 1950 miles in the short space of ten days. In those days railroad communication ended at St Jo, and the only means of transportation beyond to the Rocky Mountains and the Slope, was bv means of the stage-coach and the saddle-horse.

The sacred pony ranks first, the war pony next, then the buffalo pony. Others are used for various purposes. An Indian will promise the "bad God" that if they are permitted to escape some extremity of danger, they will "consecrate a pony" to his service. These vows are faithfully carried out, never allowing one of the band either to mount or strike him with a whip; but it has been said that the Indian drives a shrewd bargain with the devil by consecrating invariably the most worthless in the whole herd. No bridle or lariat was used when dashing after a herd of bison, for "the buffalo pony" was so trained that, although the hands were fully occupied with rifle or arrows, correct guidance was given by the legs, and a good pony could tell, by a touch or a word, just when to stop and when to run at the proper speed, and by its headwork and knowledge of the business, practically keep the wild animal at his master's disposal. The war pony is selected from the best stock for his great strength and endurance. These valuable qualities are recognized by clipping the pony's ears.

It was a distinguished compliment for an Indian to present a gift to his friend, but it was considered fatal, from a financial standpoint, for the person to accept. A bill far in excess of value received was sure to follow. "Powder Face" had a large herd of ponies, and he had long insisted upon my going and selecting one that suited my fancy. I certainly had no use for a gift of this kind, but, by continued reference to the subject at every visit, and thinking he was feeling very much grieved at my persistent refusal, I modestly consented that he should select one for me. The next morning a young buck rode up, leading a most beautifully dappled gray creature. After he tied him, he left as silently as he had come. The animal was perfect both in his manner of style and look of swelldom, his tapering head and slender limbs, his eyes glancing with almost human intelligence as he stepped proudly around. The little sagacious beauty was literally mantled and clothed with mane. Every morning this same young Indian came for an hour or two to break him into the way he should go. After lariating him, he would throw him down and choke him while the saddle was being put on. A bridle and rope-halter was put over his head, then blindfolded with a big piece of cloth, which consisted of something less than a square yard of tough, thick calico. When all was ready the rope was taken off, and the blindfolded pony scrambled to his feet, and by the time he got there, the Indian was in the saddle. How he did it nobody knew, for we never had time to see. The young buck would lay his face down on the proud neck and bury his sheet and himself in the mass of hair. After kicking, and rearing, and literally waltzing over everything and everybody bucking and doing pretty nearly everything that a Western "cayuse," or "broncho" could do, for it would be impossible to mention an artifice mentionable that he did not resort to, except to lie down and roll over, this feat was accomplished by degrees. While one hand managed the ropes and cruel bit, the other manipulated the sheet that enveloped him, the ends of the garment flying rather high at times.

A few weeks after the presentation, "Powder Face" sought and obtained a loan of twenty-five dollars, at the same time bringing a buffalo blanket beaded by "Walk," his wife, and continuously used by him during all of his desperate and dangerous battles, and a buckskin scalp shirt, a tribal heirloom, with seven hundred scalps attached, and graced with a long row of mementoes, the trophies of his own fame as a great warrior. My horror was somewhat assuaged as I observed the locks were all the same raven hue, and I even merged my instinctive feeling of loathing into one of interest, when I was told that this was a record of war and very ancient having belonged to three different chieftains, whose victories over their hereditary enemies, "Utes and Pawnees," were recorded by this fringe. This gift was a solemn proof of his friendship to the white man. One day he sent me fifty red birds, all enclosed in one large, crude, Indian cane-hoop cage, covered with a thin net. Grasp the situation of my being compelled, through courtesy, to accept this wild, fluttering, animated flame of red, and then, in a short time, pay fifteen dollars revenue for the privilege of doing so.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE savages were not my only companions. I was not living alone. There were culture and refinement about us, and, although this government post has ceased to be of interest, it possesses for me a strange charm from its intimate association with the memory of charming women and the bravest of men. A well-disciplined body of troops depends upon the officer who is the motive power, and, for success, must be one of both genius and firmness. Such were our friends, as courageous as any squad of men that ever wielded a ramrod, or glided through a waltz. They afforded fine material for good fighting soldiers and winners of hearts. There was some importuning on our part to obtain permission to use the upper part of the commissary building for skating and dancing. Our little gatherings were insignificant compared to the outside world, yet delightfully pleasant to us, and our entreaties were considered. Every week hospitable people met to enjoy themselves in some form. During the warm months there were garden parties, summer fêtes, and private entertainments. It was a lovely sight, as you approached, for miles to see the galleries of pretty homes and yards of cottonwood trees, hung with many colored paper lanterns and flashing lamps, vieing favorably with decorations in the East. Flags wreathed among flowers and heavy green garlands made the enclosure one vast prairie bower haunted with lovely women, ardent, generous, and radiant with winning smiles, the lights twinkling through the feathery boughs, the life, the hum of conversation, the laughter that now and then rang out from some group, fell upon one strangely, for the happy people seemed mocking the heavy dead weight of sorrow that lay upon one's soul.

The chattering assemblies vividly contrasted with the savage scene that surrounded this speck of civilization. As our own bright, lively dancing tunes were sounding indications of wakeful dissipation, the Indians' tom-tom drum would waft its monotonous tones to the the breeze revealing the fact that the company of "Tin-cup, Bright Eyes, Bright Star, or Medicine Woman," was being exclusively monopolized in the mazy whirl.

The following is the complimentary notice of a fête copied from the Cheyenne *Transporter:* "Col. and Mrs. ——'s party, the event of the season.—A grand affair. Elegant collation.

"Thursday evening last was one long to be remembered by the happy throng who gathered from the Agency and Post to attend the party given by Col. and Mrs. ——' at their elegant home. The night was perfect, the residence and grounds were brilliantly lighted, and everywhere could be seen the traces of refined taste in the arrangement for the pleasure and entertainment of the company. The handsomely dressed guests were ushered by a colored attendant into the presence of the affable host and his charming lady, and were soon made to feel the freedom of the place. The house, with its brilliant flood of light, and the moonlit lawn, with its trim, tidy, and bright appearance, were soon alive with a merry, social crowd, and everywhere could be seen the guests in their high enjoyment of the occasion. Parties of dancers came and went from the dancing parlors at a convenient place in another part of the Agency, where excellent music was furnished by our home orchestra; the music added much to the enjoyment of the evening. Much attention was bestowed upon Mrs. ——'s new greenhouse, which was a rare treat to the eye, with its fine display of plants and flowers, with their wealth of fragrance. The greenhouse is conveniently built and arranged in the latest style, with a heater and skylight, and on every hand are the large collections to which are constantly being added rare plants from the East. At twelve o'clock an elegant collation was served; the table was elaborately decorated with pyramids of flowers and choice fruits, and viands—everything reflecting the perfect taste and artistic skill of the hostess. The supper was relished by all, and received many terms of high praise for the perfection of its minutest detail. About seventy-five persons were present, among the most distinguished from a distance being Gen. H——, Commander of the Military District of Oklahoma; Capt. P——, 9th Cavalry, Fort Riley; Lieut. F——, 9th Cavalry, Fort Supply, and Dr. D——, Post Surgeon, Fort Supply. At a late hour the company dispersed, with many a kind word for Col. and Mrs. D——.

There were little of the petty jealousies, heart-burnings, annoyances, triumphs, and failures which constitute the happiness or misery of many of these exiled settlements. Life would have seemed a placid dream but for the animated presence of so many warriors. It seemed to be the liveliest of all lonely places.

We made a trip to Washington in the month of January. Relays were sent in advance and in a comfortable carriage we rode for miles and leagues over the finest roads that skill or wealth ever constructed, making eighty-five miles of travel the first day. Six weeks passed before we returned. The weather had been very severe, and I was dreading the hundred-and-ten-mile overland trip home. We reached Caldwell, and found that shining snow lay out against the uttermost horizon, like a white wall rounding the very world. Feathery flakes were fast falling, covering the eaves on the houses and the tops of the fences, while the north wind sent down a sort of sleet, making one feel conscious and anxious about venturing on such a long ride in this chill air. But, tossing defiance to the nipping breeze, and rolling up tightly in warm wraps, hooded and furred with buffalo robes into shapeless figures, we entered the snow-covered, lumbering coach, and, at one o'clock in the day, were comfortably ensconced in this roomy, close-smelling vehicle, with flapping curtains tightly buttoned down, until the corners looked like dark chasms.

Bitter winds heaped the accumulated snow into ridges, where, here and there, lay sweeping bare spots, while the mule's hoofs and the heavy stage wheels crunched slowly through frozen glares of solid ice. This sunny plain of summer had become snowy crystals and turned itself into icy space. I thought our vehicle, the crazy old rattle-trap, would dislocate our bones. This system of travel would soon make one's life a burden, and as miserable as the most cultivated fiend could desire. We went swinging and twisting along, until the deepening shades of night began to gather around us, and a light was seen glimmering through the darkness, when we found ourselves rattling up to the first stage-station, where they stopped only to change horses and furnish meals, not in a very sumptuous way. We entered the front room—the office—and found a perfect hive of hilarious, light-hearted stage-drivers, their faces seamed by hardships and exposure during their long drives in all kinds of weather, feeling and looking proud of their wonderful skill as reinsmen, and conscious of ranking with their brother laborers in any frontier community.

This company of armed ranchmen and station employés, on tilted chairs around the room, filled the place with smoke strong enough to resurrect a herring. A man in one corner was squeaking away at an old fiddle, while his companions were evidently guying him by calling for "Rory O'More," "Irish Washerwoman," and other familiar tunes, while the interested musician scraped a melody of discord that sounded like all the airs combined. Although rough, and looking rougher, these frontiersmen treat a woman with the greatest courtesy, respect, and unobtrusive chivalry, and perhaps we felt a little sentiment as we found ourselves in the midst of this wild western scene. We were considerate enough, as we ventured into the night, to compliment this man, who thought he was touching the strings of his heart's treasure, with a delicate, tender feeling, producing a sweet melancholy, and also expressed to him a regret that he was not of our party, that he might lighten the weary hours of our travel. These kindly words were gratefully received, for a smile of thanks crossed his beaming countenance. There was no moon; nothing was visible but the piercing stars that gleamed out in silence, and although I had perfect confidence in the driver, and there was a dim outline of a road, I expected at any moment to go headlong down some precipice. It required courage to commit life and limb to such a keeping, without fear of danger or accident, for the big coach went plunging furiously along through sleet as if she did not know where she was going, and had a constant determination to turn around or over on her back and head the other way. Darkness made the white all the whiter by contrast, but jolt, jilt, rumble, rumble, on we went, wrenched and twisted, while the winds roared and shrieked. The "Salt Fork" river looked like a frozen ocean. We reached the ford at ten o'clock, the driver, thinking the ice thick enough to bear so heavy a weight, started across; but in the middle of this bleak, barren, cold waste, where the winds were blowing from everlasting to everlasting we were unloaded, passengers four, three gentlemen, a government cattle-contractor, a government trader, my companion, and myself, mail bags and express, the latter being made up of finery and luxuries for the feasts of the holidays.

The uncanniness of the atmosphere was oppressive;

the wheels rattled in frozen ruts, half filled with snow, while the banks of the ravines were vertical icy walls. We were knocked senseless into sleep to be knocked awake again. The swift-running creeks leaped and danced as if they were mad with fury. One o'clock at night, nine miles from human habitation, all locomotion stopped. The driver roared "Kingbolt broke. All unload but the lady!" He was covered with sleet that had been blown in fitful gusts against us, while the saturated coats of the poor beasts were turned into sheets of icy mail. We had stopped on the brink of an ice-edged creek, and as I heard one of the gentleman say, "Be careful, don't raise her up too high, she will run back," I felt my position to be a dangerous one, and extricating myself from the coverings, with a few stealthy strides I landed myself into a Spitzbergen frigidity. Freezing to death was preferable to having my neck broken. There were so many things to dread in this bleak, white, and black howling wilderness of isolation, I did not know which fear would happen first.

The circulation in my numbed and stiffened limbs might never be restored. There I stood, exposed, facing the full fury of a gale that might sweep my feet from under, and slide me down the smooth cold sides into the racing waters of the ravine on to the end of time, where no human aid could reach me. I had positively disobeyed orders by rashly creeping out of the great canvas shelter, and if I made a sound to identify my presence I would be summarily reproved, and hung up by the thumbs at the first convenience for such punishment. If I moved forward in the pitchy darkness, I would be plunged backwards, into a deep drift, the depth of which all the shouting and floundering could never reveal my whereabouts. Although thoroughly undaunted and a good campaigner, I listened with dread anxiety (while the hurricane swept unabated) to the varied opinions regarding the intricate mechanism of the "great ship of the prairie." I heard one of the party blaspheming the fate, I was never just sure which one. The driver thought he would have to ride one of the little sagacious animals to the nearest ranch and bring relief, but with pounding and hammering, and the use of much energetic language such an exaggerated catastrophe was not in store for us; so, after a seemingly long time in adjusting the broken parts, a freezing glance from my frozen, icicle-gemmed companions I crawled into the cave of Kamtchatka and we moved on. We had big fires made as hot as the little box-stoves would stand when we reached "Bull-foot" that we might partially thaw out, and we drank a cup of hot coffee, and ate a fair breakfast, before resuming our journey.

We would swing violently almost round and round, slipping and sliding over the glassy surface. That day was a weary, tiresome one, seeming to jolt the very life out of us. As the afternoon waned, the cold grew still more bitter, and the wind increased, while the flakes were changed by shadows into fantastic shapes. Ice drops veiled the roots and twigs, while the surface of the earth seemed to be a congealed mass. As we had been due some hours at our looked-for destination the people grew alarmed. We rejoiced to see faint, twinkling lights marking Fort Reno, the spot where the soldiers were indulging in their evening pleasures, and we anxiously watched the dim, unbroken line of the horizon from whence sprung, high over all, the vaulted arch of heaven studded with stars. We had reached home—a relief to our friends, and more so to ourselves, while there was a look of satisfaction from the patient little mules that had traveled so many miles, fording streams and floundering through acres of mud and ice.

"Maria," the serving maid, was a woman of large frame with a black, shiny, intelligent countenance, and possessed of more than ordinary ability, and versatility of talent. She could, by a culinary process known to herself, make an old hen as tender as a spring pullet. She could sing, she could dance, and be pious as well as solemn; for as she busied herself day in and day out with her work, this wasted melody resounded to the beasts of the prairie, and the fowls of the air,—

"Swing low, sweet chariot,
Coming for to carry me home;
Swing low, sweet chariot,
Coming for to carry me home.

"I looked over Jordan, and what did I see,
Coming for to carry me home?
A band of angels coming after me,
Coming for to carry me home."

There was a company of colored soldiers defending their country stationed at the Post, which necessitated a Sunday meeting-place, with the powerful and successful complement in the way of a good minister of the Baptist faith, and such was the Rev. Mr. ——. This hard-shell variety man was regarded as a great accessory in their religious worship, as he would fill the church with the brimstone of perdition's fire, and shake the dry bones of sinners with new and startling threats of punishment. My maid in fancy to escape the wrath to come and blast of doom, would listen silently and motionless to the sermon of damnation, until she was wakened into enthusiasm by the songs, when each inspiring hymn would fire her blood, and she would grow into an esctatic state of the wildest heart-throb. As members of the congregation would leap to their feet, and publish their convictions, the swifter would go the maid's pulsations, until she would find herself in a chaotic state of bliss, shouting long, loud, and strong enough to burst the sides of Zion, a religious enthusiasm that rendered her valueless for hours that followed.

In a waggish way, some of the young officers reported to me that my "chef's" religion was of such a vigorous sort, and was approaching such regularity, that if the fervid fashion of the terrible doctrine continued to electrify her, they would have to turn on the Gatling gun, or bring the sergeant of the guard out to silence her exhortations, for, if some heroic measure was not taken, her glorified conscience would render her unfit for service. Knowing the negro as a people having a "genius" for piety, and in a pretty close ratio to their need of it—the greatest frauds being usually the most devout worshipers—I expostulated with her on the feasibility of a more moderate tone of religion, when her mind at once turned to the land of flowers, with a sentiment and phase of life that makes all darkies love the place where they were born, holding sacred the

"One little hut among de bushes,
One dat I love,
Still sadly to my memory,
Rushes, no matter where I rove."

She calculated over in her mind the chance of sport, and thought of the dance on the green before the cabin door, where the yellow moon used to rise out of the dark wood, and it was

"Run nigger, run, de patrol 'll ketch you:
Run nigger, run, it's almos' day.
Right through dem woods an' through that pastur',
White man run an' de nigger run faster—
Run nigger, run; it's almos' day."

The time with her had passed and gone, and the soft autumn night of Southern climes had forgotten their minstrelsy of banjo, bone, tambourine and negro song, as Uncle Ephraim, the banjo-player sat beneath the honeysuckled porch fiercely strumming at his strings, as the old fellow would halloo, "Pshaw, dem niggers can't dance! Git up dar, and shake de hoe-cake outer your boots," while he showed the young ones how to cut the pigeon-wing and take the "cross step," his heart as light as the heels of those who had danced the night through to his inspiring air; and, when he couldn't stand it any longer, he would jump up himself and sail in "double shuffle," backstep," and "cross over," and "turn around again," and "everybody rag" and a "Sif; San; Sal," and "All hands 'round," "Wide-awake juber," "Jem along Josey," and Old Suma lick-the-ladle."

> "O de singin' an' de dancin' when de yello' moon was full,
> An' de corn-field's jes' like a silber sea,
> Wid ole Moses a-scrapin' of his fiddle to de bone,
> While Cæsar trummed his banjo on his knee."

As the fiddle is the thing that equalizes rank, so the dignified, black, brass-buttoned soldier, leading his inamorata, his bombazine Juliet, out in the more pleasure-giving quadrilles and polkas, helped Maria to become a "sable wild flower," to forget her exaggerated methods of religious zeal, the world, its cares and its sorrows, as well as life, death, and the hereafter.

CHAPTER XX.

THE name of an individual becomes so identified with his character that the two often seem to be remarkably well suited together. Sometimes the name even to a stranger will convey a tolerably correct impression of the person who owns it, and such was certainly the case with regard to "Bill Murphy." His original Christian name,I suppose, must have been William, while he was a boy, but when I knew him it had been abbreviated into Bill. Perhaps "his father called him William, his sister called him Will, and his mother called him Willie, but the fellers called him Bill." At any rate, "most all the time the hull year round, there wasn't no flies on him."

It was necessary for me to take a long overland and somewhat perilous trip through the Reservation early in the month of December, and as I was unprotected, and without military or other escort (having been sent by the "Cheyenne and Arrapahoe Indian land-attorneys," ex-Governor Samuel J. Crawford and Major John D. Miles, of Kansas, Mat. C. Reynolds, of St. Louis, and Ex-U. S. Indian Agent, D. B. Dyer, of Augusta, Georgia, well known parties, who succeeded in inducing Congress to appropriate "sixty-seven thousand five hundred dollars" for their fee), it was important that I should have a responsible guide. Such was Mr. Murphy—a man who might be thirty-five years of age, with an indescribable air of command which a certain kind of authority invariably gives one, added to a list of many good qualities, hence I felt safe in placing myself in his charge.

He was an interpreter, knew every foot of the country, and every Indian. He was shrewd and well informed on all points pertaining to the Cheyenne and Arrapahoes. As the weather was uncertain, some deliberation was taken to decide the most suitable vehicle to use. A spring wagon was a business conveyance, therefore, we must be fixed business fashion. Timber bows were fitted over the top, while canvas was drawn over them for protection, leaving a round puckering port-hole in front to see through.

"All ready," shouted Mr. Murphy early one crisp morning, and we were off. The roads were in splendid condition, but in a short time we found the terrific north wind blowing when we started was increasing in violence.

"I do not like that sky," my driver said, addressing me.

"You do not mean to say we are going to have a blizzard before we have time to reach shelter?"

A mark of uneasiness in his countenance was his only answer. The white canvas-top pulled and jerked in this atmospheric demonstration, as if in the hands of the witches. As a terrific volume of wind came thundering upon us, the covering would, without any visible external agency, tear itself loose, and go gliding swiftly off. Both the rigging and ourselves were threatened with destruction. The cold was becoming intense.

"I am wondering," said Mr. Murphy, "at your hardihood in riding undismayed through such a lashing wind of fury. I wouldn't take such another trip," said this good-natured man, "if I live to get out of this, for all the money there is in it."

As the day waned there were no hopeful indications of a change. Hour after hour we drove before the extreme violence of that unabated storm. Night fell, and pitch dark, before the gale entirely lulled. It got to be so dark we could not see each other. The very blackness of darkness reigned. It was impossible to penetrate the gloom. The trusty animals were allowed to take their course. At last, we heard the welcome barking of dogs, and the familiar sound of the tom-tom, and knew we were nearing an Indian encampment eighty miles from a white man's habitation.

The camp of perhaps seventy-five tepees was at the side of the road sheltered by a grove of cottonwood trees. We drove on the opposite side to a little bunch of logs put together many years ago for a squaw-man to live in, and now occupied by his Cheyenne wife. It looked like the connecting link between a hut and a wood-pile. There was no one at home, the occupants evidently attending the "ghost dance" going on in camp. Although hardly able to move a limb, so chilled were we, Mr. Murphy, in the name of his absent and generous host, cheerfully exclaimed that he would take the liberty of offering the shelter of his roof and the hospitality of his board.

While he tried to light a lantern, he assumed to himself the office of master of ceremonies and dispenser of hospitalities with all the pompous courtesy which he could command. He helped me out of the wagon by the light of the little flickering flame, and gave me a hearty welcome to "White-eyed Antelope's" hut, assuring me that my condition should be rendered as pleasant as possible. As I waited outside, literally freezing, my teeth chattering, for there was neither music nor rhythm in my memory of it, Mr. Murphy appeared, accompanied by a squaw that grunted me a hearty welcome, and motioned to the door, while she vigorously unloosened a pole that had been put across to secure it. Thoroughly capable of accommodating myself to circumstances, I entered, while the hostess politely offered me a seat on the edge of a panther-skin couch. By rapid signs she told me she would hurry and get me something warm to drink. I was left in total darkness to listen to the wild shouts accompanied by a violent pounding upon the Indian drum that was going on in camp, while the faithful, jaded horses were being taken care of.

After a short time Mr. Murphy appeared with his lantern to pilot me through a narrow, dark, and crooked passage, leading to a small rude out-room, or shed, marching a little in advance to assure me of no danger.

"Now," said my guide as we stood at the entrance, "wait here and let me go ahead so you can see."

The lantern was hung overhead, flaring shades of yellow, and orange upon the logs. I stepped in, and saw our evening meal spread out on the dirt floor. A "slicker" had first been put down and a white tablecloth covered it (I knew at once I was indebted to the wife of my companion for the latter civilized article). As I advanced, zigzagging, the man in an alarmed way hallooed to me to stop, and exercise some of the skill of a civil engineer. It was a narrow, exceedingly narrow, escape, and he spoke just in time, for I was in the act of stepping in a skillet of bacon, while the rather long garment I wore trailing behind, as I started to sit down, would have swept out the gravy. The repast was quite in keeping with the occasion, and not to be investigated, yet the squaw had shaved from the big chunks of fresh venison with her sharp hunting-knife dainty slices that she broiled over the fire, and with this added to a cup of good fragrant coffee and crackers, bought from the Trader's, made us feel grateful and glad we were still living. We retraced our steps, entering the little room we had left to find our hostess and several Cheyenne savages, with their legs disposed of after the Indian fashion, looking the personification of the denizens of some infernal region, smoking their pipe, decorated with beads, and the feathers of their strange birds, sitting around by the light of a small candle that seemed to be growing feeble or I was, I couldn't tell which. At any rate, the white tallow had nearly reached the socket and I was beginning to feel shorter the same way.

On the rude wall hung some rare curiosities. A "Sacred beef-bladder" dried and stretched across a long-handled, hazel-forked stick, used for carrying water to the faint who participated in the "ghost dance," was conspicuous in one place. Perched over the head of a civilized bed-frame was the skin of a black shining "crow," with out-spreading wings that told of the faith in, and the coming of, the Great Messiah.

There were emblematic representations of victories and achievements. It is not my purpose to give a descriptive list or catalogue of those "natural" and "artificial" wonders. Suffice it to say, they lent an air of quaintness and grewsomeness to the place. There were many things that looked like these people spent their time where familiar spirits of another world enjoyed holding council, but Mr. Murphy urged me to obey his injunction and not venture too near the objects, for I might discover, in my superstitious fancy, some frightful apparition. I have always suspected that the kind-hearted man detected a longing suspicion in my eye, knowing as he did my great weakness for adding to my own wonderful collection, and that his warning was more in fear for the security of his host's treasures, than solicitation for my feelings.

There was some commotion, about eleven o'clock, when it was announced that the alarm was caused by United States Indian couriers from Fort Reno coming into camp. It was discovered that there were no fastenings on the old doors, and nothing but a frame for a bed. Being used to battle with the hostile array of unforeseen contingencies, I was in a most unprecedented and bewildering situation, but my courage rose with the occasion, although for a moment I had some difficulty in collecting torpid senses, and realizing what to do. But I rolled myself in my own blankets and robes, and spent that night in a wild and dreaded Cheyenne camp, entirely at the mercy of the savages, comparatively unprotected. I may have felt a little suspicious as the drumming, and shouting, and pow-wowing were kept up, without intermission, but as I knew it was done to keep away the spirit of death, I had no terror. The yellow light seemed to be wandering dismally over my room (seemingly in search of something it could play upon), from the socket of an old tin candlestick in a morsel of fat, where a wick smothered in grease was burning. In this garish illumination objects became embellished. I fixed my eyes intently on the bare, black rafters, and holes, and cobwebs, of the roof. What was that? Surely not the wind. Whirr! whirr! Flap! flap! Surely that was a dark form flying through the air. I was certain it was drawing nearer and nearer, and the flapping, whirring sound was fast and furious. I could see a pair of dark wings spread as if to enfold me. They came closer and closer, I felt claws scratching my face and heard wings beating the air. It was, it must be, the old black crow I had seen hanging on the wall coming to life, soaring around to keep me company.

I expected the little stove to get up and go off on its four legs into a "ghost dance." I wouldn't have been surprised to have had my clothes that I carefully folded take life, for sundry little feathered wizards were running all through my blanket robe, poking their wands into my ears, while something kept pulling the covers off every time I fixed them. The old bed-frame seemed surely to be turning all around on a pivot, and the tin basin laughed in its sleeve at the soap-box chair, which danced on the cold floor to the music of the camp.

A number of grotesque figures stepped from the chinks of the logs, and entered into the general frolic of scare. Every time I dozed off a thousand little savages came buzzing around my head in scalp-shirts whispering, "Fe! fi! fo! fum." I was sure hobgoblins roosted there by day and came out by night to play pranks upon the white species. On the whole, I had deliberate conviction that it was a remarkable country to be in, but, as night wore away, toward morning tired nature thoroughly overcame me, and I found slumber under a strain of barbaric sounds and shrill whistles. With simple faith alone as a solace I could sleep in any position. My dreams were more disturbed by the hard boards than the savage surroundings. I woke up with a cramp in my neck, and a good many cramps elsewhere. From the time I lay down until I got up, hours of aches and agonies elapsed, but I unfolded myself, peering long and steadfastly at eagle feathers, and the black raven that was still quiet overhead, before I could realize that "the goblins would catch me if I didn't look out."

Every thing had been made ready for an early start. We had camping accommodations, forage, and rations. We entered our wagon before sunrise. The morning was clear, but intolerably cold, and wintry. To set out on an extensive expedition of eighty miles a day in such weather was not a subject of agreeable contemplation, but, while wind and weather were entirely ignored, I wondered how soon I would be "found missing." The road winds and winds, and the chill air grows intense. The temperature is watched with solicitude, At last, about ten o'clock, having traveled twenty miles, and after a few more degrees of cold would have been insufferable, we struck and followed the line of a creek where we soon came upon a little open wilderness, a grove of cottonwood trees in the heart of a valley.

There was a deserted camp-ground at the edge of the road hedged in by the willow brush. A network of woodbine with their leaves turned red, ran riot, affording a picturesque effect to the scene. Indian trails would through the woods towards the prairie and everywhere traces of deer were visible.

"Now," said my guide, "I will make a rousing fire, and give you a good breakfast."

Soon the thin smoke went curling aloft, and on a log over which robes and blankets were spread for a seat, I watched the process of a camp fire's frugal meal-getting. The midday sunlight had come out bright and warm, radiantly glinting the leaves of the surrounding trees.. Nothing had been forgotten or overlooked, that would appease my appetite or add to my comfort, but Mr. Murphy said we would have a hard pull to get through by night, so we resumed our journey. We drove for long hours almost continuously in sight of deer, wild turkey, and quail. The beautiful bronze tails of the turkeys I would have cut off, and carefully wrapped that they might be beaded and ornamented into fans by the squaws. By the time my trip was ended I had ridden more than three hundred miles over an exceedingly rough country covered with sand-hills and sage-brush; but, a veritable paradise of overwhelming pleasure to me; for I had become a connoisseur in savage lore, and I enjoyed this opportunity, as it added to my research for weird and striking oddities suggestive of the tribes whose characteristics were untouched by modern civilization, and that were soon to be swept from this great plateau. My discoveries were almost boundless, for I investigated, and compassed with my eye remote, and almost inaccessable corners, securing superstitious instruments, hoary with age, thus doubly combining a business trip of hero fidelity, with one of my own heart's interest.

There was surveying, and road-making, and work began, and went on. The question of farming had now commenced to agitate the Indian. The proposed innovation on their do-nothing everyday life was opposed by the extremely conservative class who regarded a change of any kind as synonymous with an attack to subvert their people, and they seemed unable to see anything but ruin, and anarchy among the tribes in following the plow, and living in houses, or, as they expressed it, getting on the "white man's road."

This question assumed much importance. There were numbers who, if left to do as they pleased, would make good farms, and homes for themselves and families, while others could not be induced to work under any circumstances. They did not intend to be civilized, and looked upon every one who wanted to advance them in agriculture as their enemy. Farmers had been furnished by the government to instruct them in planting corn, sowing, and harvesting, etc., to follow and teach them the first rudiments of crop raising and help them build wire fences. The principle that this plan was urged upon was that men who could fight so well could learn to work. The most serious difficulty to the advancement of these Indians was the lack of power to control the roving and lawless ones, and not only force them to stop their depredating but compel them to keep hands off such Indians as wished to work.

The fundamental defect of Indian character is aversion to manual labor; but the idea was, when deprived of the opportunity to roam and pick up a living by depredating, he could be forced to work rather than go hungry. The Government argued that there would never be any substantial progress made with the Cheyennes as a tribe until they were compelled to earn at least a part of their own living, and that moral suasion had never civilized an Indian tribe, and never would. The more advanced Indians did not dare to favor civilization except in a limited degree, as the wilder element was liable at any time to kill their stock, destroy their tepees, and mercilessly slaughter them. It was not to be wondered at, therefore, that more intelligent

Indians did not join the ranks of the Agency, who were struggling manfully for an independent livelihood.

The first step was to haul away hundreds of wagon-loads of bones and skeletons that seemed to cover the face of the earth. Tepees, that were huddled together, occupied by hundreds of men, women, and children, were scattered and located some distance apart, that the atmosphere might be purified. Cleanliness, next to godliness, would have required advice for years to come with these people, for their manner of living in summer and winter was deplorable. The character of their diet, the insufficiency of their change of clothing, or having none at all, the non-observance of the most ordinary rules of hygiene, and the general surroundings, even in the best of their regulated families, were by no means conducive to health or longevity. The majority had no employment other than trying to make both ends meet, a matter of no little difficulty a few days after the rations had been distributed. "The Dog Soldiers" were a sort of military organization, or fighting band, which they kept up, composed of the tribe. It was their practice to compel the attendance of all Indians on their medicine-making, or "sun-dance," and, on refusal of any one to attend, his tepee was cut up, and the same depredation gone through with. They ruled with an iron hand, and their will, right or wrong, was absolute law. They had gone insolently to every licensed trader's store at the Agency, time and again, and shut them up by force, coolly telling them that whenever they were ready to pay six dollars each for green hides (worth only three dollars) they could open their doors, and not before. This would last perhaps several days, but, in the end, the Indians were always victorious. To pretend to assert authority which was never enforced had become a burlesque, and, as a natural consequence, the savages had a contempt for all governmental dictation. When united in any demand upon the agent, they had always compelled him to grant their request. A few soldiers served to inflame these blood-thirsty savages, and in no instance had the military arm of the Government been able to sustain and enforce the agent's authority when it was defied by these tribes.

At one time "Agent Miles" had been stopped on the road leading to the corral by Chief "Mad Wolf," Captain of the "Dog Soldiers," and his band, and ordered, at the mouth of their Winchester rifles, to issue them beef which they were not entitled to. On his return to the agency he asked for military force to assist in arresting "Mad Wolf." The latter painted himself black, threw away his blanket, mounted his pony, and declared war. Hundreds of Indians rallied around him instantly, and when Major Randall arrived with but one company of troops of cavalry they defied him and the agent openly. With scores of muskets cocked and pointed, they compelled him publicly to proclaim his abandonment of all attempts to arrest or punish "Mad Wolf." They said Major Randall never flinched from his soldierly duty, but confronted from one thousand to two thousand armed, infuriated savages with the coolness of a veteran, and informed the agent he was subject to his orders; that if he said fire, he would open fire upon them immediately. The agent saw that this would insure the murder of every white person at the agency, soldiers and all, and so made the humiliating concession demanded of him. This situation stared me in the face: I was aware that around me would gather black tempests to encounter, and that lying at my feet was a rough track to travel. There were startling rumors of a smothered uprising, to decide whether the idea of the Indians or Government should prevail; to determine whether the Government should be free to move them forward along the lines of progress, or they should remain in their savage state unmolested.

It was always evident that feasting with these savages was an exhilarating function. In riding through the camps, one day, we stopped for a moment at the tepee of one of the representative Cheyennes and heard them revelling in a great feast. To prove in an earnest effort our good will toward all great and warlike braves, we stepped through the little opening "flap" penetrating their lair, when a wonderful sight was revealed. The place was filled with feather-bedecked, paint-bedaubed warriors. Big, and straight, and of fine physique, they looked every inch the red men of tradition. They were brilliantly accoutred in showy trappings, elaborately beaded garments, curious ornaments of feathers, odd bits of shining metal, and valuable skins.

Here in great evidence flourished, in all its native environment, the "big pot" in which was brewing what to us seemed shadowed in mystery, but we thought best for our interests to show absolute confidence, remembering "what is one man's meat is another man's poison." I knew the Greeks long since were fed on dog, which they considered a delicious morsel. The common people of Rome ate them; some of the South Sea Islanders live wholly on them; in China they were uniformly one variety; in Canton the hind quarters were seen hanging up in the most prominent part of the butcher shops, while this kind of flesh was almost a sacred dish with the Sioux. It had been noted that the patriotic instinct of the Cheyenne and Arrapahoes had decreed that "fat puppy," should not masquerade in a foreign dress but boil forth in all its Indian ruggedness, and, on occasions of great ceremony they were served in the most approved style. Wolf meat to them was appetizing, while skunk was most highly esteemed as an article of diet. Hence I watched that kettle with some misgivings.

Having recklessly placed ourselves in a position to be entertained we knew we would be held in great contempt if we refused to partake of their banquet, for it was a time when they were not overburdened with flattering hospitality to the white race. Figuratively speaking, we were "between the devil and the deep sea." I knew I was being watched, and any repulsion of countenance would be readily detected. After a greeting and interchange of "how how" civilities and many signs, I helped myself to an infinitesimal small piece of what I am sure was wholesome boiled beef, but my friends have always declared I partook of a most delicate piece of "mongrel cur." Incidentally this won me the friendship of the camp which was fast becoming hostile, but I have always felt that I sacrificed enough to win almost anything. There was a significant gleam in the eye of my friends, which showed how thoroughly they enjoyed what they thought my discomfiture. A skewer thrust through some kind of a little carcass supported by two forked sticks hung immediately over the center of the fire. Here was his canineship sizzing, and broiling "done to a turn to the Queen's own taste" and he had been turned until his hair was singed off, and was now going through a roasting of various stages, the victim of savage delight. Pulverized crickets made into cakes were being roasted, as likewise grasshoppers, and even slugs. These delicacies were being cooked in a pit arranged in alternate layers with hot stones. Mexican Indians eat a food made into bread from the roasted leaves of a plant allied to the Century plant, and another kind is a dough of Juniper berries. In the same great desert the "screw bean" which grow on Mesquite bushes is utilized and relished. The Bannocks manufacture cakes out of different kinds of bulbs, and prairie Indians delight in a dish of wild turnips which civilized people would not be likely to enjoy at all, while soap berries furnish an agreeable diet for many of the savages. In California the copper-colored aborigines do not disdain the seeds of salt-grass, and gourds are consumed in the shape of mush by tribes in Arizona. Assiniboines digestively devour such curious things as acorns, sunflower seeds, grape seeds, flowers of cat-tails, moss from the spruce fir-tree, and the blossoms of wild-clover.

"Stone Calf" was an old savage, true to his faith and his medicine, with no reverence for the doctoring of the white man. He denounced, with the fiercest Cheyenne invectives, any modern ideas to any conception of authority. His appearance was not any different from that of his tribe, except in the malicious cast of his countenance, a resolute stolid visage, the picture of savage pride. This red fiend was widely known as having been an influential man among the tribe. He was always the leader of the turbulent element, a ruthless, and most uncompromising enemy of the whites, and for cold-blooded scoundrelism unsurpassed in experience of Indian atrocity.

He lived in remote parts of the Reservation, near Cantonment, sixty-five miles from Fort Reno, living with his braves on the cattle trail. It was a common occurrence for them to take the choicest beeves, and the finest horses as they chose from passing herds, and owners of the same were frequently held up and their money demanded by members of his band. He would sit down to a long and silent contemplation of the great things he expected to achieve, with a retrospective vision of the brave deeds he had done, while tiding over between hay and grass; but his warlike countenance would radiate at the sight of the first green of spring, for then came his harvest time. One day, during the threatening demonstration, he and a number of his wild followers walked into the Agent's office, and as it had been months since any of the employes had had the pleasure of seeing this old "scalp lifter" and his imposing retinue of painted braves, it was, to say the least, a surprise, if not enough to turn them white with apprehension. These fiendish looking imps stood around without noticing a soul. This is supposed, at times, to be an evidence of sociability, which it is necessary when you see them to know in order to understand. During the time intervening between this, and their former visits, a telephone had been put in the office to connect with the office of the Commanding Officer of Fort Reno a mile away. While no doubt not a white man in that room, if asked, would have been able to tell you even his given name, one of the number courageously stepped to the instrument and as he rang the bell, and softly halloed "Hello, is this Fort Reno," the whole number of Indians looked like they would eject themselves from the office summarily.

They looked askance, and evidently thought it an infernal machine, with death and destruction lurking all through it. They scanned the thing critically, but of course would not be convinced that it was not a deception. They were as silent as dead men, and looked so murderous that the operator of the machine began to multiply quakes, and wonder whether he was as smart as he thought he was. In a seemingly cool, deliberate, dramatic way, he had the interpreter explain to them how a message in their Cheyenne language carried many miles over the little wire would talk back to them; and to impress upon them the truth of the assertion he had an interpreter stand at the Fort Reno end of the line, and, while the two were talking to each other, the one would explain how he had put in a sentence and heard its answer come back in its exact connection.

They looked puzzled, but betrayed no emotion. They were suspicious and believed the thing foolish, and reeking with "bad medicine" while the white man talking and explaining was trifling with them. They listened with an incredulous expression, believing the military would appear at any moment. A storm had come up in the meantime, and while murky darkness closed around, though at midday, and as the lightning played over the wires illuminating the room by blinding flashes of electricity, and the whole thing lighted up with the blaze, followed by deafening reverberations and, as they believed, the spirit of devils was rioting around, and determining to take no more chances with such pyrotechnic display, they gave one jump in a body and, with low guttural sounds, made rapid space between that building and open air with nothing but a suspicion of the tail end of a sheet left as they passed through the door, for the hurrying clouds and the howling winds, were fit companions in nature with the evil and despair of their souls. It was believed this incident, happening at such an auspicious time, made a great impression on this wily old fox. The red demon lived in his hatred until he was gathered to the tomb of his ancestors in the big village of the Great Spirit, two years ago, when he died with "spinal meningitis." It would be difficult to imagine a more humiliating, or unpoetical rendering of the last moments of a brave great warrior. His taking off was pronounced a good riddance, and from what I can understand, it is presumably believed that he has gone to a "cold corner in Hades where the sinful freeze forever in seas of imperishable ice" and with an epitaph quite characteristic of his life.

CHAPTER XXI.

"Coyote," the Apollo of the Arrapahoes, has long been a prominent figure at Darlington for years having been "Lieutenant of the mounted police." He was a solid wholesome looking Indian who appeared to good advantage in the regimentals of his rank, with his big nickel star. You could at almost any time, see him riding at breakneck speed through the Agency, his eyes bent upon the neck of his steed with no change of expression but a get-out-of-the-way look; his long black hair flying loose, and untrammelled by mink, or otter, while his quaint, and dingy moccasins wherein he clothed his feet savored of the wild and romantic.

Although dressed in his dark blue uniform, glittering with buttons of polished brass and a great expanse of immaculate shirt-front, he wore adornments enough of savage insignias to make him picturesque, for he occasionally elaborated his soldierly apparel by gracefully throwing his sheet around him, putting on boots, and giving a rakish slant to a black slouch hat which invested the wearer with an autocratic air, befitting the highest rank known to the regular service. With his cartridge belt, and six shooter scabbard, he was formidable to look upon. When he tried to relate to you in English some incident either of pleasure, or duty, without the aid of an interpreter, the first sentence always started with "me and my pony go," and then, with signs, and great exertions, he made you understand he had come back and, figuratively speaking, the pony was always with him and frequently decorated with feathers, and strips of red flannel plaited in his tail and mane. The air was freighted with rumors, and rebellion threatened every hour. Wavelets of surprise incessantly fluttered over us. There was plenty of sensationalism and excitement to satisfy even the most cloyed, melodramatic. It was a day full of the intolerable sunshine, and night full of pitiless stars. There was a comedy being played on a scale of magnificence that was not often equalled if ever surpassed. There were strong situations that contained a powerful story of the human heart involving much rapid action. It was a star company playing with the situation running principally to the high tragic. The place possessed the rare charm of being at all times interesting, and entertaining. It was a life of unceasing care, hazard, and anxiety, but one of intense interest, and varying incident. Days passed in silence and sameness, yet each bearing a hidden burden of coming change, the calmness of a sleeping volcano from which fire and flame hurling destruction on all might at any moment burst forth.

There was plenty of excitement on this edge of civilization. I had no hesitancy in venturing to affirm that such a man as "Stone Calf" was unquestionably, in his line, a complete, and unqualified success, and if the government had not already presented this dusky warrior with a "round President medal" for sending up clouds of smoke, setting out seas of fire, and raining down bullets, I was sure it was simply an oversight that would be rectified by the next "incoming authority."

Speculations, and inquiry about the outbreak now engrossed the attention of all. At last, matters became so bad we commenced to devise plans. We knew the record of these Indians to be relentless. They had invariably proved treacherous and unreliable. I soon began to familiarize myself with all that transpired, and investigate the various points of danger; and, as incident crowded upon incident, I found a network of harassing uncertainties, and perplexing technicalities and was more convinced that the nearest approach wherein I could find safety would be in a steel-linked, bullet-proof, coat-of mail, I was brave at first, but the continual strain of anxiety took away my dash, and I have heard the same avowal come from men of undoubted courage, for the more you know of the Indian's warfare the more you dread him. I knew if the situation continued it must result in some dreadful tragedy of which it seemed exceedingly probable that "I was on their list," and would be the first victim.

For weeks, my sleep was full of dreams of the horrors of scalping knives, tomahawks, and other cheerful-looking, blood-curdling, death-dealing weapons, and, in my waking moments, wondered if that "legend of the peach with the emerald hue that grew" would end in such unbroken life of woe. There were many discouraging views, and we stood in awe at the prospect before us of setting to a task of developing a peaceful and happy community with powerful enemies more than half around us. We could now naturally decide from our own particular angle of vision, a judgment based by personal experience. It was history behind us, history before us, of glory, and gore. More than once in my short but stirring career did I turn my eyes toward the sky with the impression that I was taking my last look at the sun. I commenced to grade my opinion all the way from Paradise to despair, and wondered if in flight lay my only safety.

It was long past time for the mocking-bird's appearance in southern countries, but in this part of the world, for some mysterious reason, one favored us. His coming seemed like an omen as he was heard unheralded one night at a self taught symphony. This stray-feathered songster that seemed lost on the prairie, might perhaps be heard in the daylight, but the evening hour he chose for his song, and his favorite concert room was a close dark thicket in a cottonwood, near my window. In the stillness of such a shadowy and dewy retreat, he would often begin before sunset, and carry on his music through the long nights as a travesty on the barbarous tom-tom.

As a solo delivered from the moist gloom of the garden border, certain it was this bird never sounded so effectively as with such midnight surroundings. I would listen to the song of the warbler and transcribe it into all sorts of versions. Then again what mystery could be greater than the natural melody of the joy of life which birds interpret in their own fashion, and which is for them an act of love and rejoicing all in one. Think of a tramp mocking-bird, his family the pride of exquisite civilization, warbling his clear bugle notes as if to soothe the Cheyenne's savage breast. The only definition we could give of this gifted songster's presence among us was that the Gulf breezes had wafted him far from his home-ties in Texas, and, losing his way, he had become a wanderer on the earth and, hearing of my night watch, had stopped to comfort and cheer me in my trying hour. We never doubted but that he would continue the search for his old haunts in the impenetrable thicket of blossoming creepers, and that this little bird's heart would again have the pleasure of singing in the old familiar undergrowth of crimson-fringed, gold-mottled flowers when he was assured of my safety, and he could leave, feeling that he had assuaged my many dreary hours by his thrilling night-song.

That the white man would thrive no doubt, some day, and be able to live in prosperity and health on this part of the great plateau that was to be known as "Oklahoma," there was little doubt, but it was now no place for peaceful craftsmen and tillers of the soil. The Indians were heavily armed and prepared to pour plenty of shots into all their enemies at Darlington. It was often asked of the government if there was no limitation to be placed upon the license of these savages to do as they pleased in the part of the country assigned to them. I felt there was a daring and peril in my life no fiction could approach, and a sight of these people was always a suggestion of some hair-breadth escape. The government undoubtedly would have lived up to its engagements if it could, but there was so many overturnings and frequent changes of administration, each faction with its different policy, that nothing could be counted on with certainty. Fort Reno had been exchanging troops and we were waiting for re-enforcements to overawe the savages; and a squad of infantry soldiers to watch the premises constituted the garrison. All the frontier border had begged and implored the Department to put a stop to murdering, robbing, burning and pillaging. The change in administration from Arthur to Cleveland gave some hope, but the sentimentality of misguided Eastern ecclesiastics that had never seen an Indian on his native heath, representations of the press that filled columns of their journals with paragraphs, about the wanton abuse of the noble red man, for sensational news that were read and digested far and wide, in sympathetic horror at the recital, by the public, causing diabolical aspersions to be cast on those in authority working to solve the vexed Indian question, were some of the things that impeded progress to a satisfactory end. If the above enthusiastic ministers, in the luxury of their own homes, had been serving a grateful nation in the heart of the Indian country, perhaps they would have preached their sermons more understandingly.

Col. S——in command, and officers at the Post courteously insisted I should make the garrison my home temporarily, and the ladies voiced with them in declaring they would not risk themselves living without protection in such danger for anything. But assuring them of my appreciation I most graciously and bravely declined, wishing to carefully preserve the chains of domestic union and feeling the loyalty of my purpose surging through my breast, believing the entire "State Indian, and Government Department would hold me personally responsible if I left my post," the colors continued to flap in the breeze from the same old stand.

A pleasant day it was, in the genial sunshine of dawning autumn, and in the happy temper of our own hearts, when I was made cognizant of more immediate danger, as "Coyote" came suddenly, excitedly, in great alarm, and all out of breath to the house to prepare me, tell me, and warn me that "may be so-me one sleep kill 'm," that being Arrapahoe English interpreted by signs, meant we would be killed that night. He used his sweeping motions wildly, rapidly, and confusedly, this good brave-hearted fellow, while each and every flip of the forefinger and turn of the wrist expressed his great anxiety and desire for my safety, begging me not to remain where I was but go to the "sodjers," the blue coats. He held both hands before him, with the thumb and forefinger of each close together, to indicate an extremely short space of time; then with the palms down, he passed the right over the left, signifying that dark of night, "one sleep," would be there before I knew it, and that "Old Crow" head man of one of the Cheyenne outlaw bands, was to lead in this diabolical plan. With the right hand and arm extended upwards, thumb and forefinger formed into a crescent, other fingers closed, added to the same movement, for "one sleep" was information that the rising of the moon at night had been fixed as the unfailing indication of the moment of attack.

He told me, in a graphic way, with refreshing details, the latest and best improved manner the Cheyennes had in hanging you up by the heels and then building a slow fire under your head; then with an excited outburst of English, he would exclaim "maybe so-me one sleep no see 'em," meaning that it was very probable, after that night, he would not see me alive again. In all my fear and trepidation, I began to think that our trusted and tried "Lieutenant of Police" was nothing if not an alarmist. He told in a most bloodcurdling way (which I knew to be without exaggeration) how the "Dog Soldiers" and head-men were carrying on their councils and war dances, and how the old squaws were aiding and abetting by urging them to hostilities. At last, evidently relieved, having complied with this act of friendship, he was compelled from utter exhaustion to rest for breath.

In all the annals of "border warfare," none will go down to posterity more conspicuous than the horrible conviction I had of atrocities that the ingenuity of the savage alone can invent that awakened and filled my boasting spirit at this information, and my dignity as a self-respecting historian can vouch that all the golden sunshine that lighted up the Indian summer and wrapped the distant prairie in its mellow tints suddenly turned brown and rusty as the Satanic genius of Indian hatred brooded on the beautiful landscape.

These were the worries and harassments of a woman who had set out in life to accomplish a brilliant future. but nothing is quite so hopeless as it seems, for "he that hesitates is lost," and so without faltering or making one miscalculation as to my throbbing brain with its tumultuous thoughts, I heard a swift moccasin tread coming rapidly around the house, and a quiet fervent joy filled my heart when I looked up and saw "White Horse," my "Claude Melnotte," stoically and completely hidden from view by his ample white sheet, standing in the door.

He maintained what at first seemed a moody silence, while I had a mingled sort of superstitious foreboding of evil. My first thought almost whelmed my soul in anguish and despair, yet I never doubted for a moment that this high-spirited descendant of a daring race was my friend, and had brought tidings of some kind to relieve my tortured heart.

"What dreadful news in this, White Horse?" I said excitedly, wrought up to a fever of anxiety.

In the wildest chaos of doubt I imagined he was horribly mysterious, and, while he could not speak or understand a word of English, and I was evidently manipulating the sign language backwards, it was not to be wondered that my visitor was not as satisfactorily and rapidly explaining the situation of surrounding conditions as I thought he ought to be. "Coyote" had brought the one idea, the one dread thought, that possessed me. I listened in an agony of impatience for my answer, while all was profoundly still, but the horribly suggestive sounds of the ever-beating tom-toms in the camps, and a pitiful wailing from Maria and Joe.

Dropping the white cotton mantle from his head, revealing a fine manly face and black glossy locks that were adorned with feathers and otter fur, the tall, lithe figure, with a stoically abstracted air, took his seat, while I expected him to pronounce the verdict, "Prisoner the sentence of the court is that you be taken hence to the prison from whence you came, and from thence to the place of execution, and that there you be hanged by the neck until you are dead" (or bound to the stake and burned). The bright sunshine was shining in patches on the floor, yet it was dark and cheerless, for there was an unspeakable pang, a heavy, suffocating feeling, around my heart.

At last, after comfortably adjusting himself and gracefully winding his sheet around his waist, this young brave, decorated in all the insignia of savagery, slowly commenced to move his fingers, in a whisper as it were, for his motions were intended for me alone. In abbreviated signs, he said, "I come tell you, I long time watch over you; for I'm your friend. My heart is good to you. The Indians are talking very bad; but I have not forgotten my promise to be your friend. You must not be afraid now, until I come and tell you what they are doing; for you are near my heart, and I'm your friend. Be strong" (meaning brave). He handed me, as a present and memento, a beautifully-beaded, ochre-stained tobacco-pouch, to impress me with the sincerity of his words and as a proof of his fidelity.

I did not dissolve into woman's retreat or spend gloomy moments contemplating the horror of the situation, although I thought of many things that called up the strongest inducements for life, and resolved, if I could get out of that region and safely through that night, with dignity and self-respect, I would do so at the earliest possible moment; for this was one of those cases in which discretion, if not absolute cowardice, is the better part of a whole catalogue of virtues for any woman who did not want to be carried out feet-first; but here staring me in the face was all my indomitable strength of purpose, and untiring patience, and past good record to be sacrificed; my present condition to be suddenly unmasked; my glory torn from me; my war-leaves lost out of the books of history, and a great eulogy blotted by a tear; but after a full consultation with myself upon the subject, I hastily prescribed a successful line of policy that would lead me to substantial aid on the highway of my endeavor. It would take columns to tell in detail the exciting events of that day. It possessed much interest and dramatic worth. Of course a feeling of dread for the future involuntarily crept over me, and I felt that I was to be a real live heroine of a most exaggeratingly thrilling episode. These people were in a state of insurrection, in open rebellion against the authorities. I was an alien in their country, and, while I did not amount to much personally, singly, or collectively, there was a sickening foreboding in my heart. The idea of being taken alive, to be tortured and roasted over a slow fire, whilst the fiends danced around and exulted over my agony, was the dread consummation which made my blood run cold. I could feel what little scalp I had lifted, wrenched off, and reeking, and see it added to the long string of those which already hung from the belts of these cut-throat braves. I revelled in a delirium of horrors and veritable nightmares. I could dimly read "my title clear" in the distance, on my little gray wooden, weather-beaten cross, the same old oft-told story and the same oft-told Hennessy fate: "Killed by the Indians." Men have had wondrous adventures, in this *fin-de-siècle* age, and may be able to tell a worse tale of scare than this, but my own experience renders me incapable of appreciating anything more real. Death was in the air we breathed, and yet still very much alive.

"Coyote," doubtless had directed authority for the announcement which he made. That night I wooed the drowsy god in vain. My spirit was so filled with vague unrest that I strode into the starlight of my open window and listened with all my senses to the increasing sounds of the tom-tom and the voices of the night. The river flowed silently past and only now and then could I hear a "glurg" and splash. The fragments of sound were like invocations and added sacredness to an hour exquisitely pathetic. The still, pure air seemed stifling, and, if possible, exaggerated the blended "ha-yahs" that gathered strength from the first dull murmurs that fell upon my ear. With nerves and sense strained and alert, I waited some sign or signal of sound that they were coming. The noise they were making was seldom heard, and I do not think will ever be utterly forgotten.

At the first shimmering touch of moonlight that brightened in the western sky and shone through the cracks of the cottonwood trees, whose leaves swayed in the breeze, I realized the full terror of our position. My heart was wrung with a vision of its own hopelessness. The report had been sent out that we were under garrison protection, but I heard a furious clattering of horses' hoofs coming like mad. The grotesque weirdness of this spectacle spread out in line, forming up in perfect silence. I looked at the blue belt of sky that hung above me, and, as I remembered there was a Strength greater than man, I fell on my knees and asked with all my soul if there was a way out of that fearful place, and if so, to guide me to it and "quick." I waited for the crack of a rifle or the whizz of an arrow, and could almost feel it coming with lightning swiftness and unerring aim. As a hundred or more of these fiends spread out in the open all was mysteriously silent save the clanking of the horses' bridles and the beating of my heart.

The lamp of goblins and fairies, the full-orbed moon, rose in mid-air pouring forth a delicious light, clothing the scene in a drapery wild and awful. The sight became distorted into the most grotesque and horrible forms. Then, as they shifted, their forms were magnified to many times the natural size and appeared to me lifted into the sky horizontally, vertically, and perpendicularly. Their horses looked like giraffes; tufts of grass and meager scrubby vegetation were transformed into noble forests of gigantic trees, as through my eyes, the transformation which surrounding objects as to size had undergone was like the extraordinary vividness of a mirage, the palace of maze, with its many-sided mirrors which reflected and re-reflected five hundred times.

They were but a stone's throw from us, and I knew they were seeking some trace of our presence, but they held some kind of a council and suddenly the war-whoop of these savages rang out, sounding as if every leaf and blade of grass had a demon voice. Then they shot away like meteors, and in a twinkling disappeared down the road in a cloud of dust. While I was prepared for any emergency my whole frame was shaken, as was my nervous system, leaving me in an awful tremor of excitement. In another moment the strain about my heart gave way and the imprisoned blood went bounding through my veins. I felt from that moment I could make up the rest of my life account and leave the Indian out of the ledger. I was so stampeded and full of scare that nothing sound could be found in me for some time. I think breathing stopped and artificial respiration had to be resorted to, for the last I remember to have seen distinctly, as the moonbeam that lay across the floor shifted from its place and reached out toward me, was the world fading from my sight as it went sailing among the stars. The following morning we were told that our midnight visitors were "Cheyenne dog soldiers," and the yelling savages had gone to some of the friendly Indians cutting up and destroying their tepees, killing their dogs and chickens and threatening their lives. The ominous war-clouds continued to hang over us, and it seemed as if all the forces of a vigorous vituperative Hades were let loose. There were no "tattoos," as a precaution, the nights were already dark at our house for two weeks after the past episode. We did not feel safe to have a light in that time, but how could any one tell what stealthy forms might be lurking around the corners? One or two of my companions, braver spirits than I, would frequently venture forth and come back to comfort me, declaring that not a red soul was in sight.

Nothing but the white buildings of the Agency shone faintly through the gloom. I peered through darkness so dense that it seemed almost perceptible to the touch. I strained my eyeballs until they ached and cracked in the sockets: but they would grow accustomed to the Egyptian black until there would gradually develop before my vision gigantic Indians, fiendish, grinning Indians, and forked-tongued Indians, while the discovery of a myriad of little Indians would start the chills on a race over my anatomy. This horribly perpetual rush of images and sensations ran through my mind and lengthened the hours, while I waited for

Brick Commissary building that was my shelter and protection during hostile demonstrations.

one friendly star to force its way through the cheerless dark to lend a pitying touch to break the dull, dead monotony.

CHAPTER XXII.

My confidence had all but deserted me. I began to believe I was constitutionally and habitually timid, but was glad I had at last moral courage and honesty enough to acknowledge it. I lost all my old prompt resolution, and sat wavering which course I should adopt (believing a good run was better than a bad stand), and instead of recruiting my energies rather added to my weaknesses. It took one stout-hearted and well-fitted by nature to live in this country. To be sure it was a land of big gain and ultimately fair promises, but, as the prospects then looked, the odds were in favor of getting more than we wanted. I kept up an enthusiasm that was certain to be tested under the most discouraging circumstances, for while I tried to keep up an effervescence outside, there were terrible apprehensions and depressions inside. The house was fast becoming a chamber of horrors. Think of living two weeks without a light, fearing that your life would be snuffed out, as it were, and having to listen to the young bucks as they filed by the gate, each one uttering a war-whoop that would put all others to shame, while their endlessly varied yells were sometimes as startling as they were wild, for each seemed to exhaust his ingenuity in inventing some new torture of sound or twist of the tongue which would startle me half out of my wits. What a relief if I could have been surprised by a band of troubadours, trolling off "Paloma," a Spanish waltz, or "In old Madrid," on their tinkle-tankle mandolins and their mellow-twang guitars, refining the noises of the night and unconsciously deadening these instruments of torture, while ' Mammie, Come Kiss Your Honey Boy," or, "Down in Mobile," extracted from the glistening darkey with his banjo, would have unfolded my unfledged wings, and patiently resigned me to an endless continuance of this seemingly shoreless, and fathomless abyss.

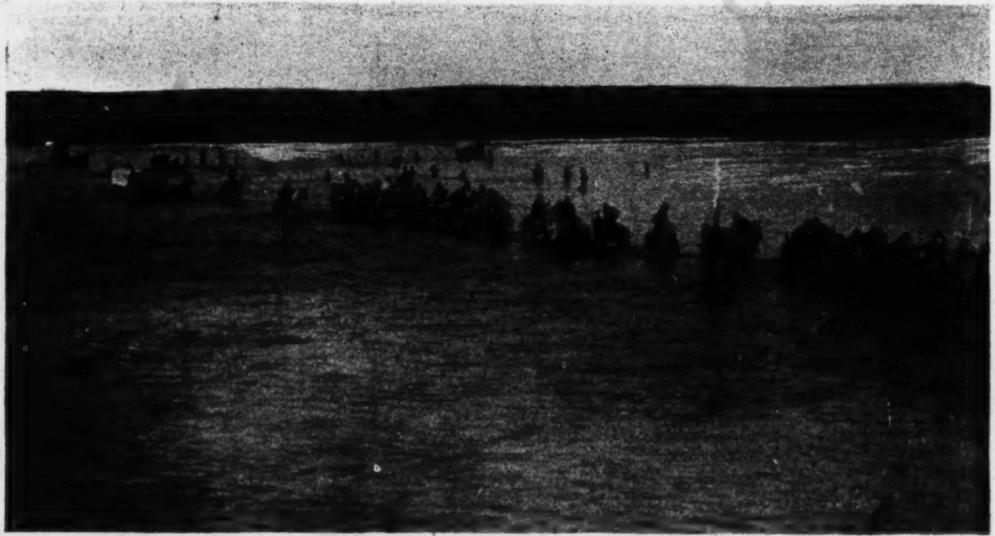
But at last, after days of this wholesome, appetizing terror and hostile demonstration, I suggested, with some emphasis, that I thought we might at least have firearms of some kind in the house besides a small weapon of death to be used on ourselves, in preference to falling into the hands of these savages to be tortured, and that we also adjourn for better protection to the big brick commissary building for the nights, until military reinforcement of hope came with the prospect of our being delivered from such mental suffering. Indian police did patrol duty, but the exchanging of soldiers from the different posts had reduced the number at Reno, so that it required the entire force left there to protect their own property. One of our number, who was a great wag, presented himself at the house that evening as "officer of the day," sending a message to me, with his compliments, "that he had reported for duty." The exhibit this handsome, good-hearted fellow presented was most irresistibly funny. He looked like a revolutionary communist. He had a quiet, off-hand, unconscious manner of saying funny things that heightened their humorous value. He remarked that his reputation was a little damaged as to courage, but he wanted to be in at the death, and was prepared to distance all competitors, so he had come as officer and trooper combined to escort the culinary contingent and myself to new quarters. He was a veritable walking arsenal. Four murderous deringers hung from his belt, and a saber at his side. The band of his hat was filled with cartridges, and he stood solemnly looking down the muzzle of a carbine. I think his pockets were filled with loose powder, for I know I was keenly alive to the fact that I was in the presence of great danger now, but with one point of advantage over the Indian, that it would be a supreme moment of combustion, when neither my friends nor myself would ever know when, where, or how I had gone.

I well remember how I enjoyed my rest on the hard boards of that commissary floor. It was the first sleep I had had in many nights. A half dozen United States I. D. commissary blankets were utilized for a bed. Even in the midst of such surroundings we were cheerful, yet it seemed indeed like some diabolical place, stolen bodily from the Inferno, rather than a real home, for real every-day life. Great was the heart-throb of joy when, at twilight, the night officer, Major S——, reined up his four-mule, canvas-covered Army ambulance (the official means of transportation), and shouted out in a sonorous voice, "Light up! Light up! Mrs. ——, they will be here to-morrow" (meaning the troops). I was perfectly willing to take his word for it, but I remained in darkness and wentback to the old quarters for that night, a philosophy of life practically adopted.

"Avant-couriers of war," dust-covered, with a worn-out look, were flying by on foaming steeds at regular intervals bearing dispatches to Fort Reno from General Sheridan, the Great-Commander-in-Chief, who was with General Miles and their escorts, coming through by ambulance from Caldwell. Well do I remember the awful state of anxiety that pervaded the community and the eagerness with which every sign was hailed, or item read that encouraged hope. The troops were making a forced march over hundreds of miles across the country from Forts Riley, Robinson, and other posts. At Pond Creek, Generals Sheridan and Miles, with their branch of the army, were detained by high water, but a soldier is never daunted by a trifle like this; such obstacles are entirely ignored in the catalogue of valid reasons for delay; so improvising a bridge out of their wagon-beds, and swimming their horses, the long dark lines of uniformed men were soon to be seen stretched across on the other side awaiting the order to advance. With eager eyes I saw and with ears heard the cavalcade of troopers, horses, mules and transportation wagons, coming under the sheen of a noonday sun, bright and beautiful as if with the bloom of everlasting peace and hope to warn the savage he had lived near the white man long enough to understand the futility of dashing himself against the walls of civilization. As the army approached the river to cross the stream, it presented war's brilliant pageant without any aspects of horror. There is a glamour about the soldier, even if dressed in well-worn campaign uniforms, that dazzles. The glittering caps, the gleam of arms, the tramp and neighing of horses, the winding of bugles and horns and incessant bustle and activity, presented the splendor of military array, while accompanied by bridge equipments, provisions, wagons, horses employed in the cavalry and the conveyance of baggage.

Major —— galloped forward, accompanied by a single aid, to pay his respects to the house, while every bosom was glowing with enthusiasm. The bringing in line of such an army (the largest number of troops brought together since the " Rebellion ") that stood ready more to warn the Indian against hostilities than wage war against them, was in itself a sufficient reason for great apprehension. The government wished to impress on their minds that soldiers were like the trees of the forest, so great in number that, if the red man must have war, he could give it to him as long as there was a warrior left. Every one displayed the most anxious solicitude.

Surely the Indians were conscious of their inability to resist such an army, although they had prepared desperate measures for defense which could only be possible with such barbarous people. On the arrival of the troops at the Fort, a salute of many guns was fired, the band played and, for days, Generals, in their brilliant regimentals of rank, with other dignitaries, were greatly in evidence. The earth seemed to be



Gen'l Sheridan crossing the Cimarron River, I. T., July, 1885, en route to Cheyenne Agency.

covered with this stamp of personal integrity, bravery, and conspicuous gallantry.

In rapid succession, as incidents crowd upon my memory, I bring to mind the delightful social call of those two great Indian-fighters. This sentiment appeals more strongly to me from the fact that it dissipates a little of the obscurity lingering about this far-away, barbaric world. The army ambulance in the panorama of the wide plain, to which we had grown accustomed, the officers and guards as escorts, the sentinel on post walking his beat in front of the door, while the "Great-Commander-in-Chief" sat socially chatting inside, recall scenes of wondrously tender recollections.

Time is a wondrous spinner in this modern age, when the hours of the day are too few for the busy purposes of men and the threads of our life run so swiftly. "Darlington," now in the edge of "Oklahoma," a country that stands for a type of development belonging to our day, the growth of which has been one of the most remarkable in the history of American territories and unprecedented in the records of civilization, is a fragmentary settlement where the flow of meditation is uninterrupted save by quiet communion of friends, where the coming-up and the going-down, the floating-in and the drifting-out, the learning and the forgetting, the reaching for the new and putting away of the old, the loving and ceasing to love, that make up this veering, changing, illusive thing which we name life, goes steadily on. With the evening comes complete repose and no sound is heard save the unceasing river sleeping among the sand where it will continue to ebb and flow beneath the mists and clouds until the darkness will have long since passed into emblems of another life. Now the luxurious Pullman whirls sleeping passengers over long stretches of prairie, stopping at the new thrifty towns of "Pond Creek," "Hennessy," and other familiar points named for the stage-ranches on the route, when years ago it required long anxious days of worry and fatigue to make the trip that is now made in a few hours.

While the "Cheyenne Government Agency," and "Military Post," are still there, the piping times, where, for years, the walls of the tepee rung with hideous revelry and the nights resounded from the discordant sounds of the ceaseless tom-tom that made my pulses leap to the fantastic but exciting measure, have ceased to be, and now nod the sunflower and overspreading cornfields in the moonlight and the strange golden grain, palpitating in a light born of sunshine, looks as much as to say it is all done with now.

In my mind's eye is a vision typical of the period—one never again to be known in that now flourishing country, for the Indian has diminished, faded away as it were, and been supplanted. In the short space of six years, that region has become a land of permanent cities, prosperous farms and enlightened people. The cow-boys, a class of hardy, unconquerable developers of Western resources, cannot be duplicated in the future, for the conditions under which they lived can never again reappear. The railroads, the boomtown and the barbed-wire fence have done their work for him. He and other characteristic figures are passing away or "going over the range" as he would express it in his own vernacular; while the journeyings of "divorce seekers" to his once monopolized haunts is simply astonishing. On through trains are to be found numerous passengers who are silent and indifferent to all local surroundings; no valley with its beautiful landscape and dreary overstretching sky of blue, no vast area of fine crops, no forlorn waste of parched prairie, not even the usually attractive prairie dog towns, seem in the least to interest them.

A party with a ticket to Arkansas City, Kansas, and a cosmopolitan air alighted from a train from the East not long ago, and after breakfast sauntered to the office of the ticket seller and asked for a ticket to Oklahoma. In reply to the question what particular part of the land of bandits and sand storms he desired to visit, he replied that it made no particular difference to him, and remarked to the agent, "I am from New York, seeking a divorce, one of the while-you-wait-and-without-pain kind, so you will please ticket me to some quiet part where the divorce mill always grinds and never tires, and I will try and do the rest." He was sent through to Oklahoma City, because that point would give him the longest ride, and the railroad the most money.

It is said in Guthrie there is a large hotel which makes a specialty of this class of patrons, and its guests are designated as the divorce colony. Special hotel-rates are secured by the lawyers for their clients for the few weeks necessary to this quick and painless separation.

The "Cherokee Strip," that was one continuous surface of unbroken prairie, has by its intelligent population, accomplished work simply phenomenal. Not yet two years in civilization, it has cities, water-works, electric lights, and churches of every denomination. Theorizing on the march of events, the progress of humanity and the future of the race, the people will give such a cordial support for the removal of the capital they will get it. The free-swept wings of heaven blow forever in peace through this beautiful land, where the sun drops over and down behind the world, and the stars shine like glow-worms, and the moon in its dazzling splendor is brighter now for its tranquillity.

There is not only a past behind this beautiful country, this marvelous "Oklahoma," but a future before it. Silently the Indian in his picturesque garb will melt away into the wilderness of civilization, blankets and beaded adornments will be displaced by the more commonplace habiliments of the present day, to the regret of both traveler and artist, but the change will be in the nature of an advance.

I salute thee, dear old wild and hilarious Darlington, and in memory of the many pleasant days and for the sake of the solemn nights of "war-whoops" and "ha-yahs" within your borders, I drop a tear and will for you ever cherish a loving remembrance.

THE END.